SWINE FLU CONTINUES TO SPREAD, PGS 3, 6, 10

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TORONTO • THURSDAY, APRIL 30, 2009
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Celebrity pg 35

Beau steps in to rescue Paris

Not this week, I have a headache

PROTEST Thousands of Kenyan women vowed yesterday to begin a weeklong sex strike to try to protest their country's bickering leadership, which they say threatens to revive the bloody chaos that convulsed the African country last year.

Leaders from Kenya's largest and oldest group dedicated to women's rights, the Women's Development Organization, said they hope the boycott will persuade men to pressure the government to make peace.

Eleven women's groups are participating in the strike. The groups have also called on the wives of President Mwai Kibaki and Prime Minister Raila Odinga to abstain. It was not clear how either wife responded to the request.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Comment pg 8

Relating and hobbies

Homes pg 19

Clean and simple lines

ShareYourViews
torontoletters@metronews.ca

Singing sensation **Tenor in Toronto**

SAUL PORTO/QMI NEWS

British tenor Paul Potts debuts music from his highly anticipated second album, Passione, yesterday at a free performance on the Waterfall Stage in First Canadian Place. Since winning Britain's Got Talent competition in 2007, Potts has become a singing phenomenon.

Double dipping decision

Province takes on Ticketmaster

Ontario moved to take on U.S. entertainment giant Ticketmaster by introducing legislation yesterday that would stop companies from profiting twice by selling and reselling the same tickets to the event.

The amendments to Ontario's Ticket Speculation Act will help ensure consumers have fair access to tickets for concerts, sporting events and the theatre, said Attorney General Chris Bentley.

People complained they were getting ripped off because tickets would appear at greatly inflated prices on TicketsNow, a resale site owned by Ticketmaster, minutes after first going on sale on the primary Ticketmaster site.

"They want a fair shot at the tickets that are available, and they said loudly and clearly: 'When the same or a related enterprise can benefit from both the selling and the resale of the same tickets to the same events, that's wrong,'" Bentley said.

"They just don't think that's fair, and we happen to agree."

Ticketmaster issued a statement late yesterday expressing its disappointment with the Ontario legislation, saying it would do nothing to enhance protection for consumers who created and drive the resale market.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Speaker breaks deadlock, gives EI bill second reading

The Commons has given approval in principle to a Bloc Québécois bill that would eliminate the waiting period for employment insurance benefits.

The Liberals, Bloc and NDP banded together to support the private member's bill against Conservative opposition, but it took a rare vote by Speaker Peter Milliken to break a 138-138 tie and give the measure second reading.

Milliken said it has become traditional for the Speaker to vote in favour of a measure when casting his deciding ballot.

The Speaker only votes in the House in the event of a tie.

The bill, introduced by Christian Ouellet of the Bloc, would mean workers would be eligible for benefits immediately after losing their job. Currently, there's a two-week hiatus before benefits kick in.

The legislation now goes to committee for detailed study.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

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Six months for spitting
A Mississauga man serving a life prison sentence for murder has had another six months added to his sentence for spitting at a female clerk as he was led away from court. Timothy Belisle, 39, will serve the time concurrent with his sentence for the Jan. 26, 2008, stabbing death of Norman Anderson. TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Local

Munk Debate to tackle foreign aid question

The Munk Debate will feature UN special envoy Stephen Lewis, left, and Oxford economics professor Paul Collier arguing for the benefits of foreign aid. Arguing against them at the June 1 event in Toronto will be Dambisa Moyo, a Goldman Sachs economist, and Hernando de Soto — hailed as the greatest living economist by former U.S. president Bill Clinton. The two sides will square off on whether wealthy nations should increase foreign aid in a world where more than three billion people live on less than $2 a day. The debate at the Royal Ontario Museum is open to the public. THE CANADIAN PRESS

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Tomorrow's Metro

Music
Lady Sovereign puts the pieces together in Jigsaw and life.

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WHAT'S ONLINE TODAY

Video A Calgary bus driver rescues a cowering dog from circling coyotes at **metronews.ca/canada**
Video Manitoba's flood-blocking sandbags find new life at zoos and construction sites at **metronews.ca/canada**

Lotteries

Lotto 6/49: 8, 20, 22, 29, 33 & 49 Bonus 48
Ontario 49: 17, 19, 22, 34, 36 & 39 Bonus 18
Ontario Pick 3: 6 4 4; **Ontario Pick 4** : 2 2 0 5
Encore: 5702251
Daily Keno: 2, 5, 11, 12, 15, 16, 20, 23, 25, 35 36, 39, 40, 42, 48, 64, 65, 68, 69, 70
These results are not official.

Three more swine flu cases

One each from Peel, York and Durham brings Ontario total to seven

The number of Canadian swine flu cases moved up to 19 yesterday with the confirmation of three additional cases in Ontario.

All of the cases nationwide have been described by health officials as mild, and all seven people in Ontario were recovering at home and had not been hospitalized.

In Geneva, the World Health Organization raised its pandemic alert for swine flu to Phase 5, one step short of a full pandemic.

That move is less important to Canadians than what local officials report about potential person-to-person transmission in the community, said Dr. Vivek Goel, chief executive of the Ontario Agency for Health Protection and Promotion.

"Is it going to community-level transmission from person-to-person ... that's what the public should be looking at more."
Dr. Vivek Goel

"We're already at the level the disease is present in our country, the next issue is it going to go to community-level transmission from person-to-person and that's probably what the public should be looking at more," Goel said at a briefing in Toronto.

Public health officials said the three Ontario women added to the list are all in their 20s — the same age group as the first four Ontario cases — and all are mild cases of the flu. Six of the seven diagnosed with swine flu had recently visited Mexico.

The three new cases are from York, Durham and Peel regions.
THE CANADIAN PRESS

On the web
- For an interactive map of swine flu cases worldwide, visit metronews.ca.
- For the latest updates on the swine flu epidemic, visit metronews.ca.

Woman stranded in Mexico dies

Victoria George

PETERBOROUGH A Toronto woman who suffered a severe asthma attack and cardiac arrest in Mexico, and whose family said they faced delays getting her back to Canada because of swine flu concerns, has died.

An email statement from the Peterborough Regional Health Centre says Victoria George died there Tuesday night. She was 29.
THE CANADIAN PRESS

GuluWalk **Kids helping kids**

TONY BOCK/TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

About 3,500 students walk down Yonge Street, starting from Lawrence Park, to Metro Hall in the GuluWalk which is focused on supporting the abandoned children of northern Uganda.

News in brief

METEOR Researchers are anxious to retrieve any possible fragments of what's believed to have been a meteorite that appeared over Newmarket March 15. The ROM is asking residents in the area for their help in finding the space debris. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Playing it by ear is future of MP3s

I.D. Forget face scans, eye readers and fingerprints.

In the next frontier of biometric identification, where body parts serve as passwords, the future is in the ear.

British researchers believe unique sounds that originate in the inner ear cochlea during hearing could be used for identification purposes because they differ significantly from person to person.

In this case, the noise emitted by the ear in the response to sound would act like a personal password, activating a cellphone or an MP3 player to turn on only if the "acoustic fingerprint" matched that of the registered owner.
TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

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Miller defends wage freeze

Toronto City Council has passed a wage freeze that cancels cost-of-living increases and performance bonuses for non-union employees this year, a decision criticized by some councillors as "embarrassing," "hypocritical" and "unfair." Mayor Miller defended it on the grounds the city needs to find ways to be "fiscally responsible." TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Peace ends as 21 arrested

Violence erupts on Day Three of downtown Tamil demonstration

More than a dozen Tamil demonstrators were arrested yesterday evening after a group of protesters spilled over into a busy downtown intersection.

Mounted police and uniformed officers moved in as the crowd pushed forward on University Avenue to the north side of Dundas Street around 4:30 p.m. A scuffle broke out between a group of young men and police, ending three days of peaceful protest on one of the city's main downtown arteries.

Officers arrested about 15 protesters, mostly young men. The crowd of about 1,000 began to chant "release the protesters."

VINCE TALOTTA/TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Police arrested 21 protesters at the Tamil rally on University Avenue yesterday. A woman sustained minor injuries.

When police began to push the demonstrators back from Dundas Street, a second struggle erupted.

Another man attempting to fight with police was thrown to the ground, restrained and taken to a holding van, where the others were being held.

In total, officers made 21 arrests. One woman, who may have been stepped on by a horse, was taken to hospital with minor injuries.

A chunk of University Avenue between Dundas and Queen streets has been closed since Sunday. Hundreds of protestors have camped outside the U.S. consulate, demanding that President Barack Obama intervene in the Sri Lankan civil war.

Their presence has many complaining about noise — there's been round-the-clock chanting and drumming — as well as traffic disruptions. Local councillor Joe Pantalone said it is the police chief's responsibility to determine when, or if, the protest should end. Earlier in the day, police Chief Bill Blair asked Torontonians for patience.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Near 1,000 rally Legislature over local hospital closures

CUTBACKS About a thousand demonstrators outraged over cuts at Ontario hospitals descended on the front lawn of the provincial legislature yesterday to demand that Premier Dalton McGuinty save local health services.

> **"It's about ensuring that they really have access to the best quality care."**
> Dalton McGuinty

Emergency rooms are shutting down and hospital staff are being cut to balance hospital books, which is putting people's lives at risk, the protesters charged.

McGuinty, who was assailed in the legislature with angry questions about the cuts, said his government isn't closing hospitals or trying to dismantle local health services.

Plans to "consolidate" emergency rooms in the Niagara area, including Fort Erie, are really about pooling resources to create a centre of excellence, he argued.

"That's what this is all about. It's about ensuring that they really have access to the best quality care."

But those who took part in the protest say the government should start listening to what local residents are saying in those communities, rather than relying on the bad advice of local health agencies.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Post presses stop Mondays for summer

INDUSTRY The National Post newspaper is going without its Monday print editions for nine weeks this summer in a move that will lower its newsprint costs.

A spokeswoman for the paper, which is owned by debt-plagued Canwest Global Communications Corp. said yesterday the company will still publish a digital edition, which mirrors the exact look of a newsprint version. However, it won't go to the presses for the summer, starting June 29.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Newspaper woes

- In Canada, the Halifax Chronicle-Herald cancelled its Sunday paper, while the Halifax Daily News shuttered its operations.

Cops seek suspect in Milton heist

ROBBERY A thief escaped a Milton bank with an undisclosed amount of cash yesterday morning, police say.

Police are seeking a man, five-foot-eight to six feet, with a dark complexion.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

News in brief

WASTE Small neighbourhood stores will be the losers as the City of Toronto switches the contract for supplying yellow garbage bags to a new retail chain, says a business spokesman. Small businesses who get city garbage pick-up must use city-sanctioned yellow garbage bags. They're available from Home Hardware stores at $3.10 each. But starting May 1, the bags will be sold only by Canadian Tire stores, which won the contract through tender. TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

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Manitoba's sandbag dilemma

Water from heavy flooding in Manitoba this spring is receding, which leaves many communities with one burning question — what to do with millions of used sandbags? In Winnipeg, the city is spending around $1 million on contractors to deal with the mess. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Canada

Spock helps Vulcans prosper

About 300 residents of the southern Alberta community of Vulcan are to be given a private screening of the new Star Trek movie next Wednesday in Calgary — two days before the worldwide release. The town had made a pitch to host the latest movie's Canadian premier, but was turned down. Actor Leonard Nimoy, left, went to bat for the town, which prompted Paramount to agree to the private screening. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Bloc courting Conservatives

Duceppe to offer Harper a set of economic policies to consider

The Bloc Québécois is set to lay down a series of economic policies on which it hopes to work with the Conservative government.

And that will provide Prime Minister Stephen Harper with two potential opposition dance partners to keep his minority government alive.

Bloc Leader Gilles Duceppe told The Canadian Press he will unveil a series of economic policies at a news conference today in Ottawa.

SEAN KILPATRICK/THE CANADIAN PRESS

Gilles Duceppe: "I don't comment on polls. I win elections."

The announcement comes on the heels of a poll that showed the Bloc behind the Liberals in Quebec for the first time in five years.

That poll — coupled with overtures from the NDP, and now the Bloc — suggests the Conservatives have more room to manoeuvre to avoid a vote of non-confidence.

Duceppe shrugged off questions about the CROP survey. He said he would continue doing what he has always done, which is to make suggestions and approach confidence votes on a case-by-case basis.

"I don't comment on polls. I win elections," Duceppe quipped when asked about the survey.

The Tories only need support from one other party to keep their minority government afloat.

The Bloc and NDP had been systematically siding against the Conservatives on confidence votes, with some exceptions, for most of the last three years.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

ANDREW VAUGHAN/THE CANADIAN PRESS

Arielle Milner, right, and Stephen Burgess walk near the Hants Community Hospital yesterday in Windsor, N.S.. The pair visited the hospital's influenza assessment clinic after Milner felt ill.

Flu not exaggerated: WHO

HEALTH The mild nature of swine flu infections that have been reported to date outside of Mexico may be undermining efforts to get the public to prepare for a range of pandemic scenarios, some experts in public health say.

Some officials are already facing accusations they are exaggerating the threat of the swine flu situation.

"Some people are alleging that we're hyping the threat. That's not the case," said Dick Thompson, a spokesperson for the World Health Organization.

"What we're trying to do is to provide the best information possible. To gather that information and to provide it to the public. Because that's the best defence." THE CANADIAN PRESS

News in brief

DZIEKANSKI A pathologist says there were no underlying problems with Robert Dziekanski's heart that might have caused it to stop after he was stunned by an RCMP Taser in October 2007 at Vancouver's airport. Dr. John Butt says he found nothing wrong with Dziekanski's heart.

RESTRICTIONS Defence Minister Peter MacKay says he will look into restrictions NATO has put on journalists covering the war in southern Afghanistan.

RECESSION A new poll suggests that half of Canadians consider the economic crisis to be only a mild recession.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

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Bottled water unnecessary: Group
An advocacy group says Ottawa has needlessly spent millions on bottled water and should phase out its sale in federal facilities. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Duke dodges coyotes

Calgary bus driver saves dog from wild canines

Duke the dog's first bus ride came after the biggest fright of his young life.

The pooch was picked up on the side of the road early Tuesday morning by a Calgary transit bus after being cornered under a car by two coyotes.

Duke's problems began when he was out for a walk with his owner, Hugh Magill, and another dog. The canines spotted a coyote and bolted. The older animal came back, but Duke, an Australian cattle dog who is only 18 months old, headed for the safety of Magill's truck.

That's where bus driver Dawn Hagel found him cowering.

"I opened the door and I said to everyone, 'We get a dog now,'" said Hagel.

"The one guy was prepared to go and encourage the dog, and opening the door was all that it really required. The dog was in the bus in a heartbeat."

Duke was coaxed to the back of the bus by friendly passengers while Hagel called animal control.

JEFF MCINTOSH/THE CANADIAN PRESS

Calgary Transit bus driver Dawn Hagel, right, gets a nuzzle yesterday from Duke, an Australian cattle dog, which she helped rescue from a pack of coyotes, as owner Hugh Magill holds him.

The dog had a licence and was safely returned to Magill.

"He did have a couple of bites on his back leg, puncture wounds, so the fact that he'd already been bitten twice and the two of them were circling the truck, I think they might have got him if the transit driver hadn't stopped," Magill said.

He said from now on, he plans to walk Duke on a leash in the area. But he added the pooch has probably learned his lesson about straying far from his owner.

"He was extremely relieved to be back home," he said. "He was pretty scared."

THE CANADIAN PRESS

News in brief

EMPLOYMENT Non-farm payrolls lost 79,600 jobs in February, with manufacturing taking the worst hit, Statistics Canada reported yesterday. The agency said those losses continue a slump that began last October, which has cost 296,000 jobs. The agency's survey of non-farm, payroll employment found the biggest February drop was in manufacturing, where 19,300 jobs were lost.
THE CANADIAN PRESS

Beatty baffled by lobby fees

SCHREIBER Former defence minister Perrin Beatty says he was amazed to learn a German firm spent millions in lobbying fees trying to win his backing for a project to build armoured military vehicles in Canada.

Perrin Beatty

"To put it mildly, when this was first raised it came as a major surprise to me," Beatty told a public inquiry yesterday.

Evidence at the inquiry has indicated that Thyssen AG paid German-Canadian businessman Karlheinz Schreiber $6.5 million for securing a 1988 "understanding in principle" with the federal government on the so-called Bear Head project.
THE CANADIAN PRESS

G11

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Comment & Views

Comment

He's just that into record collecting

Relating

Steve Collins

metronews.ca/collins

As my splendid colleague Andrea Woo wrote last week on the musical vetting potential of mates, "A man who has amassed shelves of classic vinyl records … has invested time, money and effort into something he is passionate about. A Top 40 fan, not so much."

Point taken, but it strikes me those high fidelity hectares of vinyl could also serve as a warning. Sure, they're evidence of artistic devotion, but what if this attachment is not ultimately transferrable from vintage rockabilly to you?

This extends past music and into any of the obsessions (more kindly termed hobbies) guys have a propensity to develop, and whether it's hockey fanboyhood or political blogging, the degree of competition they exert for their attention can be considerable. (Gender generalizations are, as always, just that. A buddy is a World of Warcraft widower, genially accustomed to his wife's extended virtual absences in the land of Azeroth).

On the web

- For more views on relating, go to Love Bytes at metronews.ca/blogs

Only the chronically single can truly afford the detritus that accumulates in the pursuit of the complete works of B-movie auteur Lloyd Kaufman or Star Wars action figures in the original packaging.

Once shack-up has occurred, or even once someone is sleeping over on a regular basis, this clutter, no matter how lovingly curated, will be subject to quiet or not-so-quiet assessments every spring cleaning season. The space a man's hobby occupies also testifies to the money, time and thought it soaks up, and suggests the degree to which it might be a rival for his affections.

One common solution is to set off a space where the treasured junk can be hoarded and worshipped in peace. This, of course, ultimately threatens to turn you into one of those he-golfs-she-gardens couples, meeting briefly at mealtimes and then again at bedtime — to sleep.

While it's always better if he can share his interests, it's also probably good policy to respect her indifference to the manifest brilliance of his fantasy baseball picks.

I still love loud, dumb music, D&D and most everything else I surrounded myself with when I was 14 and there were no girls around (and when I gave no thought to which was cause and which was effect).

My beloved properly takes no interest in these, and indulges and mocks my weird fixations in a combination I find frankly irresistible. Whatever my incurably uncool pursuits say about me, her endurance of them attests to her patience, sense of humour and general grooviness.

Steve Collins offers his best guesses on relationships for Metro every two weeks.

Views

This ain't Flint – doom, gloom be damned

Scott Broderick

"What's with all the doom and gloom?"

This is the No. 1 question being asked by local business owners lately in reference to the media's role in this self-fulfilling prophesy called "the recession."

The epicentre of this crisis is clearly in the U.S. financial markets and automotive industry. There will certainly be shock waves felt throughout the world and Canada will not escape unscathed (just ask Oshawa, Oakville and Windsor.)

To put it all in perspective, however, the Bank of Canada is predicting that, in 2009, our economy will dip approximately three per cent below the peak of the wealthiest and most prosperous period in the history of mankind.

Eight times (more than any other nation ever!), the UN has identified Canada as having the highest standard of living of any country in the world.

- Interest rates are at an all-time low.
- Gasoline prices and new vehicle incentives are more attractive than ever.

"So, what's with all the doom and gloom?"

About two months ago, listening to one of our own radio stations, I came to the realization that we are part of the problem. I arrived at work that day and went on a wild rant, but left committed to making a difference. The "This Ain't Flint" campaign is the result of that rant meeting inspiration.

We knowingly chose controversial images and content that contrasts our current situation in Ottawa to that of Flint, Mich., 20 years ago. Perhaps this campaign could just as easily have run in any one of Canada's major cities. Author Roy H. Williams says, "The risk of insult is the price of clarity." That contrast and clarity is offered in Ottawa only to inspire meaningful conversation.

We don't expect to get agreement — just dialogue.

We are not looking for consensus — just discourse.

Most people, however, will reach the utterly inescapable conclusion that, even now, they live in the finest country during one of the most prosperous periods in economic history.

Doom and gloom be damned!

Get out and enjoy it!

Scott Broderick is the director of Ontario operations for Newcap Radio and general manager for Newcap's HOT 89.9 and LiVE 88.5 in Ottawa.

MICHAEL DE ADDER

It's your turn to tell others what you think. Email your thoughts and opinions to: torontoletters@metronews.ca

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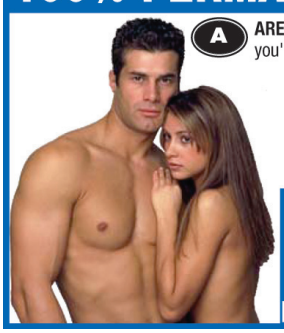

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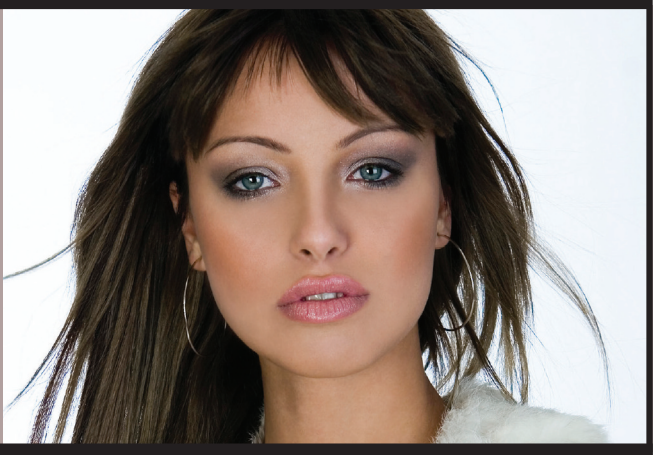

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30 Gitmo detainees cleared for release

U.S. Attorney General Eric Holder announced in Germany yesterday that about 30 detainees have been cleared for release from Guantanamo Bay, ahead of a speech appealing for Europe's help to close the U.S. military detention facility. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

World

Transsexual gets $500,000

A U.S. federal judge has awarded a former army Special Forces commander nearly $500,000 US because she was rejected from a job at the Library of Congress while transitioning from a man to a woman. Diane Schroer of Alexandria, Va., applied for the terrorism analyst job while she was still a man named David Schroer. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

News in brief

TORTURE Judge Baltasar Garzon, Spain's most prominent investigative magistrate, opened an investigation into the Bush administration over alleged torture of terror suspects at Guantanamo Bay, pressing ahead yesterday with a drive that Spain's own attorney general has said should be waged in the U.S., if at all.

KIDNAPPING Officials in Ottawa are acknowledging but refusing to confirm a media report that says a kidnapped Canadian aid worker has been freed in Sudan. News agency Reuters says Stephanie Jodoin and French colleague Claire Dubois, both members of French aid group Aide Medicale Internationale, have been handed over to a tribal leader in Darfur. The two were seized at gunpoint from their compound in the south Darfur settlement of Ed el Fursan on April 4. METRO NEWS SERVICES

Israel **Marking independence**

KEVIN FRAYER/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

An Israeli man shows his children military hardware yesterday at Ammunition Hill during a display by the army as part of Independence Day celebrations in Jerusalem. The day marks the 61st anniversary of the creation of the state.

WHO raises flu alert

The World Health Organization raised its pandemic alert for swine flu to the second highest level yesterday, meaning it believes a global outbreak of the disease is imminent.

WHO Director-General Margaret Chan declared the Phase 5 alert after consulting with flu experts from around the world.

A Phase 5 alert means there is sustained transmission among people in at least two countries. Once the virus shows effective transmission in two different regions of the world, a full pandemic outbreak would be declared.

Swine flu is suspected of killing more than 150 people in Mexico and sickening more than 2,400, according to authorities there.

WHO has confirmed 114 cases of swine flu in seven countries, including Canada, but reports are still coming in. More than half of the confirmed cases — 64 — are in the United States. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

First U.S. death

- A two-year-old Mexico City boy who travelled to the Texas border city of Brownsville on April 4 with family to visit relatives is the first confirmed death in the United States from swine flu.

Testing time, says Obama on 100th day in office

PRIME TIME U.S. President Barack Obama told a prime-time news conference marking his 100th day in office that it has been a time of national testing, given a deep economic recession and unprecedented credit crunch.

At town-hall style meetings earlier, he said progress has been made in rebuilding the economy, but more remains to be done.

"And all of this means you can expect an unrelenting, unyielding effort from this administration to strengthen our prosperity and our security — in the second hundred days, and the third hundred days and all the days after." THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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‡NO PURCHASE NECESSARY. Contest starts April 13, 2009 and ends July 30, 2009. For contest rules, details and to register/enter, visit www.thebicyclefactory.ca. Contest open to residents of Canada who have reached age of majority. One (1) Grand Prize of a 10 day/9 night trip for 2 to Ghana, Africa. Restrictions Apply. Approximate retail value is $9,200.00. Odds of winning depend on the number of eligible entries received. Skill-testing question must be correctly answered to be declared a winner. Always follow all safety rules when bicycling.

Cuba's leader says it's up to U.S. to improve relations

Raul Castro dismissed Barack Obama's policy changes toward Cuba — unlimited travel and money transfers and easing restrictions on telecommunications — as "minimal" and says it is up to the U.S., and not Cuba, to do more to improve relations. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

SUSAN WALSH/AP FILE PHOTO

Silvio Berlusconi and wife Veronica Lario in June 2004.

Wife berates Berlusconi

POLITICS Popular Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi's approval ratings are sinking fast with at least one Italian — his wife.

Veronica Lario publicly voiced her rage over reports that Berlusconi's party was lining up a troupe of TV showgirls and starlets as candidates for June's European Parliament elections. Berlusconi contended the reported plans were a fabrication of the opposition and media.

Among the rumoured candidates were Barbara Matera, a Miss Italy contestant and model, Angela Sozio, a busty redhead who participated in Big Brother, and Eleonora Gaggioli, a star in several made-for-TV movies.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Pope offers his sorrow

Meets victims of school abuse

Pope Benedict offered his sorrow yesterday to native Canadians who were physically and sexually abused at church-run boarding schools they were forced to attend, saying he sympathized with their anguish and prayed they would heal.

Benedict met with a group of former students and victims and told them of his "personal anguish" over their suffering, they said. They emerged from the meeting happy and comforted, said Phil Fontaine, national chief of the Assembly of First Nations.

From the 19th century until the 1970s, more than 150,000 native children in Canada were forced to attend state-funded Christian schools as an effort to assimilate them into Canadian society.

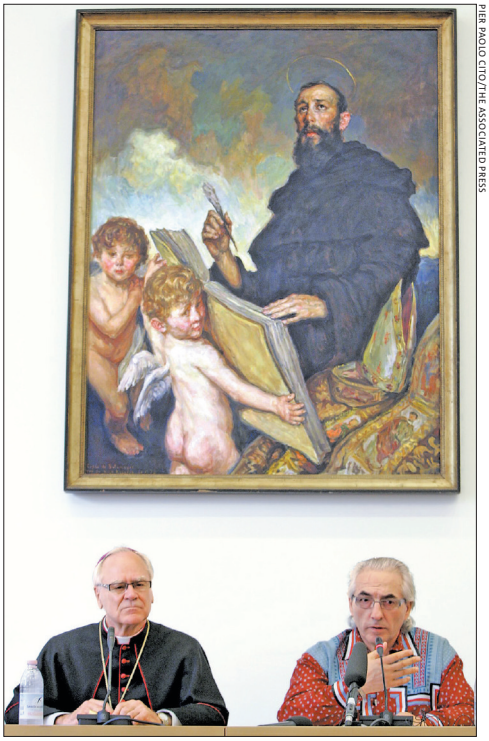
"What we wanted the Pope to say to us was that he was sorry and ... that he deeply felt for us. We heard that very clearly today."
Phil Fontaine

The Canadian government has admitted that physical and sexual abuse was rampant in the schools, with students beaten for speaking their native languages.

"What we wanted the Pope to say to us was that he was sorry and ... that he deeply felt for us," said Fontaine, himself a victim of abuse at one of the schools.

"We heard that very clearly today."

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS



PIER PAOLO CITO/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Phil Fontaine, right, national chief of the Assembly of First Nations, and Archbishop James Weisgerber, president of the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops, address a press conference yesterday after attending Pope Benedict's general audience in St. Peter's Square at the Vatican.

Call for deeper pollution cuts

SCIENCE If the world is going to limit global warming to just a few degrees, it has to slash carbon dioxide pollution much more than now being discussed, two science studies say.

To keep under the danger level, the world has to spew less than one trillion tonnes of carbon dioxide in the first half of the 21st century, according to the new studies that will appear in today's edition of the journal Nature.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

News in brief

AFGHANISTAN A top Taliban commander warned that militants would unleash a wave of ambushes, roadside bombs and suicide attacks in a new spring offensive as Afghan troops killed 42 militants in three operations, officials said.

CALIFORNIA A bus carrying French tourists through California overturned on a highway overpass in a horrific crash that killed five people and left dozens injured, including a 28-year-old tour guide from Montreal. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Toronto miner resumes operations in Spain

Inmet Mining, a Toronto miner with operations around the world, says it has resumed mining at its copper project in Spain after receiving government approval. Mining had been halted nearly a year ago over environmental issues. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Business

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Tims to roast coffee beans in Hamilton

PLANT Coffee and doughnut chain Tim Hortons Inc. says it plans to build a $30-million coffee bean production and roasting plant in Hamilton, a move that will create 130 jobs.

The Oakville company said yesterday the new plant, which will also contain a research centre, will improve efficiencies and quality control at the retailer. The plant will create 80 construction jobs and 50 operating jobs when it opens at the end of the year, Hortons said.

Tim Hortons operates a second coffee plant in Rochester, N.Y.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

CrackBerrys cut spending

Rogers Communications increased sales in its wireless and cable divisions during the first quarter, but was slammed by the cost of new smartphone subscribers and weak advertising revenues in its media division.

73 The percentage drop in Rogers' media division's operating profit to $6 million as the economy sapped advertising revenues.

The telecommunications giant reported a 10 per cent decline in net earnings to $309 million or 49 cents per share for the quarter.

Rogers has been banking on smartphone users spending more money for data plans through BlackBerrys and iPhones, and spent 55 per cent more this quarter over last year, or $225 million, to subsidize the handsets as part of the investment.

Overall, the revenue in the wireless division grew eight per cent to $1.5 billion on 104,000 new postpaid wireless subscribers.

However, customers are reining in their spending on non-essential wireless services like long distance, additional minutes, and roaming charges as they curtail travel, said Rob Bruce, the president of Rogers' wireless division.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

In brief

CHRYSLER Italian automaker Fiat Group SpA will sign paperwork to become a partner with Chrysler LLC by today's government deadline to cut labour costs, slash debt and take on a partner, but could still end up under bankruptcy protection if some creditors don't agree to reduce their debt, according to people briefed on the deal.

MAPLE LEAF Food producer Maple Leaf Foods Inc. has reported a first-quarter net profit of $2.9 million as it continues struggling with the after-effects of last summer's Listeria poisoning. Sales increased 6.3 per cent to $1.28 billion compared to $1.20 billion.

ECONOMY The U.S. economy shrank at a worse-than-expected 6.1 per cent pace at the start of this year as sharp cutbacks by businesses and the biggest drop in exports in 40 years overwhelmed a rebound in consumer spending.

METRO NEWS SERVICES

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Ted Reynolds dead at 83

Longtime Canadian sports broadcaster and CBC veteran Ted Reynolds died early Tuesday. He was 83. Reynolds' work included radio and television play-by-play for 23 sports and 10 Olympic Games. METRO NEWS SERVICES

Sports

Bolt OK after car crash

Olympic champion sprinter Usain Bolt was not seriously injured after a car accident yesterday. Bolt and a female passenger were taken to a hospital in Spanish Town, Jamaica, but both were fine, according to police. Bolt was apparently driving on a rain-slicked highway when he lost control of the BMW M3 and it went off the road. METRO NEWS SERVICES

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Hart in charge again

MATTHEW WUEST
matthew.wuest@metronews.ca

CANADIAN SOCCER ASSOCIATION

Stephen Hart has begun his second stint as head coach of Canada's men's national soccer team.

When Stephen Hart moved to Canada in 1980, he loved soccer. But if someone had told him he would one day be one of Canada's most influential figures in the sport, the native of Trinidad and Tobago might have laughed heartily.

"I actually came to Canada to do a degree along the lines of something marine," says Hart, who is now interim head coach of Canada's men's team, as well as the technical director of the Canadian Soccer Association. "My intentions were completely different. But fate had it differently."

Hart played soccer for five years at Saint Mary's University in Halifax, but got involved in coaching as a volunteer and studied international coaching techniques in his spare time.

He worked his way up the ranks gradually, starting as Soccer Nova Scotia's technical director in 1993; taking over as head coach at Saint Mary's in the late 1990s; and eventually signing on as a youth coach with the CSA in 2002.

At times, he finds it hard to believe how life panned out.

"I am honoured and sometimes very flattered that I'm in the position I'm in," the 49-year-old admits.

This is Hart's second tour of duty as interim head coach of the national team. He also had the job in 2007, when he led Canada to a semifinal finish at the CONCACAF Gold Cup. At the time, he was hoping to get the full-time gig, but the CSA went with Dale Mitchell, who was fired in March.

Hart was installed two weeks ago and will lead Canada into the Gold Cup starting July 3 in Los Angeles.

His focus is on getting the program back on its feet after watching it fall short in World Cup qualification in November.

"You want to get into the knockout stages (at the Gold Cup) because anything can happen there," Hart says.

"Hopefully, the team comes together and we can do well."

Interim tag

- Toronto FC named Chris Cummins interim head coach yesterday, filling the void left by the sudden resignation of John Carver on the weekend. Cummins, 37, joined the MLS team in 2008. He had been working as an assistant coach along with Nick Dasovic under Carver. Dasovic is being promoted to first assistant.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Blue Jays Looking for another W in K.C.

ED ZURGA/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Marco Scutaro, left, comes in to score last night. The start of the Jays/Royals game was delayed 31 minutes by rain. For a complete game recap, visit www.metronews.ca/sports.

Howard suspended one game for elbow

NBA Dwight Howard's elbow has given the Orlando Magic's playoff hopes a major hit.

Howard has been suspended for Game 6 of Orlando's playoff series against the Philadelphia 76ers tonight for his elbow on Sixers centre Samuel Dalembert.

The two got tangled up going for a rebound in the first quarter in Game 5 Tuesday night. Replays showed Howard threw an elbow that hit the Canadian above the shoulders. Howard drew a technical foul for the hit.

Orlando will also be without starting guard Courtney Lee, who suffered a fractured sinus after taking an inadvertent elbow to the head from Howard later in the quarter. Lee's status for the remainder of the playoffs is uncertain.

The Magic lead the Sixers 3-2 in the best-of-seven series. Orlando will likely start Marcin Gortat in place of Howard, and J.J. Redick for Lee. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

For full recaps of Game 5 of the Heat/Hawks and Hornets/Nuggets series, visit metronews.ca

Man U takes first leg from Arsenal

SOCCER John O'Shea gave defending champion Manchester United a 1-0 victory over Arsenal yesterday in the first leg of the Champions League semifinals.

The fullback scored in the 18th minute after Arsenal failed to clear a corner. United had chances to extend its lead but was foiled by three good first-half saves by Manuel Almunia.

The two teams meet again at Arsenal's Emirates Stadium next Tuesday.

The winner will advance to the May 27 final in Rome to face either Barcelona or Chelsea, who drew 0-0 in Tuesday's first leg in Spain.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

It's a one-rink circus for Penguins, Capitals

NHL Alex Ovechkin doesn't like Sidney Crosby. Neither does Alexander Semin, who calls Crosby an overrated product of the NHL's hype machine. Ovechkin disliked Evgeni Malkin, too, but now appears to like him again.

Oh, but there's much for the hockey world to like in this Penguins-Capitals matchup, beginning Saturday when the Eastern Conference semifinal series begins in Washington. Capitals coach Bruce Boudreau compares it to the circus.

The main attraction is flashy enough — the NHL's three biggest names under one big top for up to two weeks — but the sideshows are intriguing and figure to be entertaining. With the NHL's last two MVPs and last three scoring champions in the same series, plus a noticeable edginess whenever the teams meet, there should be plenty of subplots and sound bites.

Who will be the ringmaster? "There's more to stars meeting here, great hockey players meeting, there's great personalities, strong personalities, there's faces of the league that are clashing," Penguins coach Dan Bylsma said yesterday.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Russian trifecta

- A trio of Russians – Alex Ovechkin of the Capitals, Evgeni Malkin of the Penguins and Pavel Datsyuk of the Red Wings – were named as finalists for the Hart Trophy as the NHL's most valuable player yesterday. METRO NEWS SERVICES

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A tough nut to crack

In 1919, the 36th Texas legislature made the pecan the state tree. In southeast Texas, the Texas Pecan Festival is celebrated every year. "Pecan" is from an Algonquian word, meaning a nut requiring a stone to crack. METRO NEWS SERVICES

Food

Although popularly referred to as a nut, the almond is not a true nut, but the seed of a drupe (a botanical name for a category of fruit). METRO NEWS SERVICES

Foreigner

The word walnut derives from Old English "wealhhnutu," literally "foreign nut." The walnut was so called because it was introduced from Gaul and Italy.

EDITOR: NINA DRAGICEVIC, NINA.DRAGICEVIC@METRONEWS.CA

Just a handful of sweet heat

À la carte

Barb Holland

metronews.ca/alacarte

Nuts and seeds not only add flavour and texture to just about any dish, they are nutrient dense and provide an array of beneficial nutrients such as protein, vitamin E, folate, calcium, magnesium, copper, zinc, iron and fibre.

Walnuts are a great source of the omega-3 fatty acid and are rich in antioxidants. Almonds are high in calcium, magnesium, potassium and vitamin E. Peanuts are higher in protein and niacin than most other nuts and rich in folate.

Pecans have a very high antioxidant content. As well, nuts and seeds contain protein, especially when combined with legumes such as peas, beans and lentils.

BARB HOLLAND/FOR METRO CANADA

Sweet with a hint of spice, these nuts can be addictive.

And yes, nuts contain fat, and while it is mostly healthy-for-your-heart fat, the calories do add up.

One serving is 1 oz. (30 g) which is a small handful, about ¼ cup (60 ml), and that contains about 175 calories and 16 g of fat. So practice portion control and top your cereal, yogurt, salad or pasta with a sprinkle of nuts or seeds for a healthy crunch.

Sweet & Spicy Nuts

Sweet with a bit of heat, they can be addictive. The amount of cayenne is up to you. Makes 2 cups (500 ml).

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 egg white, lightly beaten
- 2 cups (500 ml) walnut or pecan halves
- 1/4 cup (60 ml) brown sugar
- 1 tsp (5 ml) ground cumin
- 1/2 to 1 tsp (2 - 5 ml) cayenne
- 1/2 tsp (2 ml) salt

METHOD:

In a bowl, lightly beat egg white. Add nuts and stir until nuts are evenly moistened. Combine brown sugar, cumin, cayenne and salt; sprinkle over walnuts and toss well to coat evenly.

Spread nuts on parchment paper-lined rimmed baking sheet. Bake in preheated 325 F (160 C) oven 25 to 30 minutes, stirring every 10 minutes to separate nuts, until coating is crisp and nuts are fragrant. Cool before serving.

Tips:

- Buy nuts and seeds where there is a high turnover for freshness.
- Store in an air-tight container in the refrigerator for up to 6 months or freeze for up to 1 year.

Barb Holland is a professional home economist and food writer who believes in shopping locally and in season.

Local Savour

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Ale-Battered Halibut with our Famous Yukon Gold French Fries, $15.95

In an interview with Metro, Blue Rodeo's Jim Cuddy once admitted this Danforth darling was a favourite hangout spot for the band (psst, their studio is somewhere nearby.) It's not hard to imagine why: A sophisticated menu offers all the bounty of a fine dining experience but without the stuffy atmosphere.

Try the the simple but symphonic Corn-Meal Crust Pizza with Roasted Chicken, Sweet Pepper, Onion, Oregano and Mozzarella. And, as the menu boasts, "We also serve what are widely considered to be Toronto Best Hamburgers."

Don't forget to finish the evening next door, at sister pub Dora Keogh, for a few pints and live music.

LiquidAssets

Peter Rockwell

metronews.ca/liquidassets

Movie mates

My suggestion to match wine and a DVD rental a couple of weeks ago had many of you asking what goes best with movie munchies.

I'm a potato chip fan from way back so a bowl full of salt-laden, deep-fried spud shavings is my favourite snackable when I pop in a disc. Excessive saltiness in anything can be a wine killer but the bubbly goodness of a sparkling wine cleanses the palate and works wonders with even the simplest of dishes.

The **Jacob's Creek Chardonnay Pinot Noir ($13.65 - $16.99)** from Down Under is an ideal when-in-doubt wine that goes with just about anything (including a plate of nachos or a big bag of Cheezies) with its champagne styling and smooth berry fruit undertones.

Of course popcorn is the classic movie mate and its wine partner is dictated by whether you pour on the butter or prefer your Orville Redenbacher naked. Any dry white will do if you pass on the topping but butter fans should reach for a glass of something that mimics the creaminess on the kernels like **Mission Hill's Reserve Chardonnay ($18.99 - $21.99)** from British Columbia. Now if only finding a decent flick to watch was as easy.

Prices reflect the range across the country. Some products may not be available in all provinces.

Peter Rockwell is the everyman's wine writer, working in the liquor industry for more than 25 years and travelling the globe looking for something to fill his glass and put into words.

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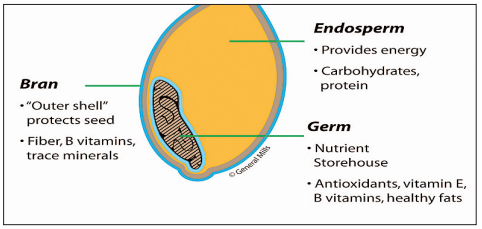
The whole story on whole grains

Most Canadians do not get enough whole grains in their diet. Nor are they aware of the health advantages of eating whole grains rather than just looking for high fibre foods.



What are whole grains?

Imagine a kernel of grain, such as a kernel of wheat. As the name implies, when you eat a whole grain, you are eating the whole kernel which has three parts — the endosperm, the bran and the germ. The endosperm makes up about 80 per cent of the kernel and is a source of carbohydrate and protein. The bran provides fibre, vitamins, minerals and phytochemicals and the germ provides vitamins, protein and phytochemicals. Whole grains provide lots more than just fibre.

What is the difference between whole wheat and whole grain?

"Whole grain" contains all three parts of the grain kernel — the endosperm, bran and germ. "Whole wheat" food products may contain only the endosperm and bran. "Enriched wheat flour" contains the endosperm.

What are the health advantages of whole grains?

Whole grains contain vitamins, minerals and literally hundreds of phytonutrients, including phytoestrogens, antioxidants and phenols. Research supports the link between whole grains and a decreased risk in overall mortality. Visit areyougetting enough.ca for more.

NEWS CANADA

Food in brief

PEOPLE Slow Food pioneer, Italian author and recipient of the 2008 Planet in Focus International Eco Hero Award Carlo Petrini will be the focus at a public event on Saturday at the Al Green Theatre in Toronto at 7 p.m. Petrini and the Slow Food movement has profoundly reshaped our contemporary understanding of food. Visit planetinfocus.org.

FESTIVAL International wines, inspired cuisine by celebrity chefs and fashionable venues all will be a part of this city's newest taste experience: Salute Toronto Wine + Food Festival, set to kick-off the city's summer festival season, May 4 - 9. Visit salutewinefestival.com.

DINNER There are still tickets available for a French Canadian Dinner by The Culinary Historians of Ontario, this Saturday at Hart House's Gallery Grill, featuring food created by Executive Chef Suzanne Baby. Tickets $100. Visit culinaryhistorians.ca.

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Beginning in May, Hazelton Lane customers can drop by guest services and pick up a free Lanes fashionable tote and Hazelton Lanes Shopping Pass which offers more than $1,500 of combined savings local retailers. METRO NEWS SERVICE

Style

The fashion challenge

CosmoTV is set to air The Fashion Show, a new fashion design competition series, this May. Produced by Bravo, the show will be co-hosted by internationally acclaimed designer Isaac Mizrahi, left, and performer/actress Kelly Rowland. It will feature two weekly challenges for designers: The Harper's Bazaar Mini Challenge, judged by the magazine's special projects director Laura Brown; and the elimination challenge. The show will air on May 11 at 8 p.m. METRO NEWS SERVICES

EDITOR: ANN-MARIE.COLACINO@METRONEWS.CA

Made in the shade

Local designers Dsquared2 launch new '70s-inspired eyewear line

DENISE SURETTE
for Metro Canada

With winter well behind us, now is a good time to start thinking about sunglasses for strolling around town, lounging on a patio or hitting the beach.

Willowdale, Ont.-born designers and identical twins Dean and Dan Caten, creators of Dsquared2 — a high-end men's and women's clothing line out of Milan — have just introduced eyewear to their collection.

A year in the making, Dsquared2 has teamed up with prestigious Italian eyewear manufacturer Marcolin to present the world with a 1970s hip-hop-inspired collection of sunglasses and frames. Marcolin also manufactures eyewear for Tom Ford, John Galliano Eyewear and Miss Sixty Glasses.

Dsquared2 will have its eyewear ready for Canadians to purchase from Holt Renfrew as of May.

The men's designs are metallic and gold-square shapes, while the women's glasses are large and rounded with a cat-eye glare.

Dsquared2's new eyewear line includes the DQ9 models for men (pictured). Their silhouette and gold jewels are meant to be reminiscent of the '70s era.

Dan Caten, one half of the Dsquared2 design team, said the inspiration for the eyewear collection came naturally to them because it was a great era for design.

"We always go with what we're into," said Caten. "The '70s were a new moment. Hip hop was a new thing."

After having designed some accessories already for its line, the eyewear release is a full collection, something Dsquared2 is interested in doing in the future with other accessories.

> **"We always go with what we're into ... The '70s were a new moment. Hip hop was a new thing."**
> Dan Caten, Dsquared2 designer

"To dedicate a whole accessory line — it's major. But we're going to try to focus on more," said Caten. "We'd like to focus more on bags."

The path into the world of accessories can be a complicated one for designers, says Caten.

"As our brand grows to a certain level, you can start doing these things. You can support another line," said Caten. "If someone can't afford to get the clothes, they can get the sunglasses. And Marcolin is one of the best."

As for opening a flagship store here in Toronto, Caten says Toronto is "definitely" on the Dsquared2 map.

SUBMITTED

Dean and Dan Caten, the identical twins behind the Dsquared2 brand, just launched a new '70s-inspired eyewear collection in partnership with Italian manufacturer Marcolin.

Richie jewelry line makes its Canadian debut

Nicole Richie has long been a familiar fixture in the front rows of fashion shows in New York and Los Angeles.

Now the fashion-forward TV star, actor and author is making the leap from style-watcher to fashion power player with a new collection to call her own.

Richie was in Toronto last week for the Canadian launch of her jewelry line, House of Harlow 1960.

Nicole Richie

Richie made a personal appearance before throngs of fans at a shopping event at the downtown flagship store of specialty retailer Holt Renfrew, where the collection will be sold exclusively in Canada.

The jewelry line is named after Richie's one-year-old daughter, Harlow, with boyfriend Joel Madden of the rock band Good Charlotte, and her love of 1960s fashion.

Richie teamed up with celebrity jeweller Pascal Mouawad on House of Harlow 1960, which features a broad range and mix of different materials and styles, including leather, silk strings, chains, rivets and gold-plated metals.

The line includes bracelets, rings, necklaces, earrings as well as headpieces. THE CANADIAN PRESS

FlareFashion

Lisa Tant

Read the blog at metronews.ca/flarefashion

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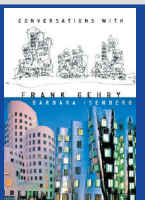
As to Disney properties/artwork: ©Disney

Homesense Spring and Summer line
New lines of home decor items and motifs have arrived at Homesense stores across the country. Seen here are some pillows from the new Sleeping Patterns line. METRO NEWS SERVICES

Metro Homes



Gehry's inspiration
Conversations with Frank Gehry by Barbara Isenberg is on shelves now. In it you'll learn the ins and outs and curves and arcs of the famous modern architect Frank Gehry.
METRO NEWS SERVICES

EDITOR: DOUGLAS.DUNLOP@METRONEWS.CA

An entertaining abode

Suite Talk

BRIAN COULTON
for Metro Canada

With summer upon us, hosting house and dinner parties is on the forefront of many people's minds.

But a prerequisite of entertaining in the home is having the proper space to entertain in. That was designer Flora Di Menna's driving idea when she fashioned the suites of The Pemberton Group's Palais at Port Royal Place; the new high rise at Bloor Street West and Dundas Street West in Etobicoke.

"The style includes clean, simple lines … it's crisp and has room for entertainment," she said. This is indicated by a layout the permits ample seating, both in the living and dining rooms. Eight to 10 people can fill seats in the living room and the dining room table can hold up to eight people, depending on the amount of chairs used around it.

"The idea was that you've got enough seating in the dining area. It's easy to have a nice sit-down dinner," said Di Menna. "It's a rectangular-type unit, so it lent itself very easy for positioning different functions of the rooms."

To make the space comfortable for guests, but still contemporary, Di Menna said she paid close attention to scale when furnishing the suite. "You can buy scaled down furniture that is still comfortable (and therefore) not as bulky," she said.

Placing furniture like a white sofa with tufted back and mixing suede and leather textures gives the suite a transitional appearance, Di Menna said. "It kind of gives you a contemporary but a little more classic look to it."

And for entertainers with returning guests that may wish to change the suite's interior design, its colour composition makes that as easy as altering accents.

"The unit itself is very light and bright with the whites and the creams. The accent colours are the splashes in the artwork and accessories," said Di Menna. "It makes it easier for later on when they change colour schemes. The base of the apartment is neutral and everything else is the accent."

Palais suites range from 560 to 880 square feet. Prices start at $233,400 and reach $315,400. For more information, visit pembertongroup.com or call 416-239-8200.

Seen here are some shots of Pemberton Group's Palais at Port Royal Place (at Bloor Street West and Dundas Streets West).

Averting a real deck disaster

DisasterDIY

Bryan Baeumler
HGTV host

Bryan Baeumler is host of Disaster DIY: Cottage Edition, airing tonight at 9 p.m. on HGTV. Visit hgtv.ca/disasterdiy for streamed episodes.

It's not very often I have the time or energy to grab my paddle and head out on the lake in a canoe — but for a week of authentic Italian cooking, wine, women and song, I'm in! I got a frantic call from Rosie, concerned that her mom, Pearl, was dangerously close to falling through her aging deck at the cottage. You may ask yourself, "what do kindling, duct tape, red paint, a few pizza oven stones and a car jack have in common?" Pearl thinks this random assortment of items — precisely positioned and properly utilized — serve as a life-support system for her ailing deck. She also believes that a coat of paint — making her deck look good, also provides a quick-fix solution to its deteriorating condition.

Watch tonight's episode where we fix up this deck and make sure Pearl will be safe and sound.

Bryan Baeumler is host of Disaster DIY: Cottage Edition. The show airs Thursdays at 9 p.m. on HGTV.

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Monarch

Canadian Gardening Magazine
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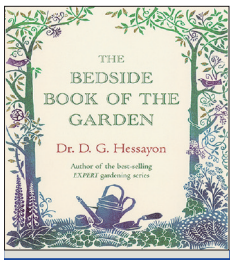
Canadian Gardening



Clippings

Getting into bed with the books

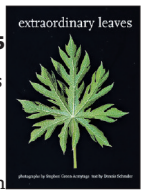
BEDSIDE GARDENER **The Bedside Book Of The Garden, by Dr. D.G. Hessayon, Expert Books, $21.95;** Essentially a repackaging of 1983's The Armchair Book of the Garden, publishing phenomenon David Hessayon (author of the 21 bestselling Expert series of gardening books) has updated the current edition, which is full of interesting tidbits, trivia and some downright useful information.

–STEPHEN WESTCOTT-GRATTON

Clippings

Wonderful world of intricate leaves

LEAFING THROUGH **Extraordinary Leaves, by Dennis Schrader, Firefly books, $45** Dennis Schrader's informative text plays second fiddle to Stephen Green-Armytage's ravishing photographs of leaves — some of the most beautiful I've ever seen. From cannas and cannabis to lettuce and lotus, with chapters on colour, pattern, shape and texture, the diversity of plant material is sensational.



–STEPHEN WESTCOTT-GRATTON

Water saver

You'll sing, 'rain, rain *don't* go away' with this stylish barrel

Get ready to replace those bulky rain barrels with a water-conserving tank like no other. CISTA is a sleek, modern rain barrel set to hit stores in spring 2010.

The vertical barrel fits onto your home's eaves and can hold up to 100 gallons of water. By storing the water upright, enough pressure is created to allow for a soaker hose to be connected. As an added feature, an LED light clearly indicates the water level in the tank, so you know when it's full.

What makes this rain barrel different?

The sleek design fits in narrow spaces — perfect for city dwellers. The cover on the tank can also be camouflaged with natural plantings. A vine, such as ivy or morning glory, will wind its way up the barrel to create a visually pleasing yet completely functional appliance.

For further details and to get all the latest news on CISTA, visit mosssund.com

–PRODUCED BY KARINA LEIMANIS

Eclectic note-taking

GOING GREEN Jot down all your garden wonders and woes in these handmade, one-of-a-kind journals that include original pages from old books and vintage magazines. A great way to repurpose what might otherwise get tossed in the blue bin.

Flora & Fauna or Peas & Carrots Eclectonote, $28 each; Uppercase.

–PRODUCED BY KARINA LEIMANIS
–PHOTOGRAPHY ROGER YIP

STACEY HAINES/FOR METRO TORONTO

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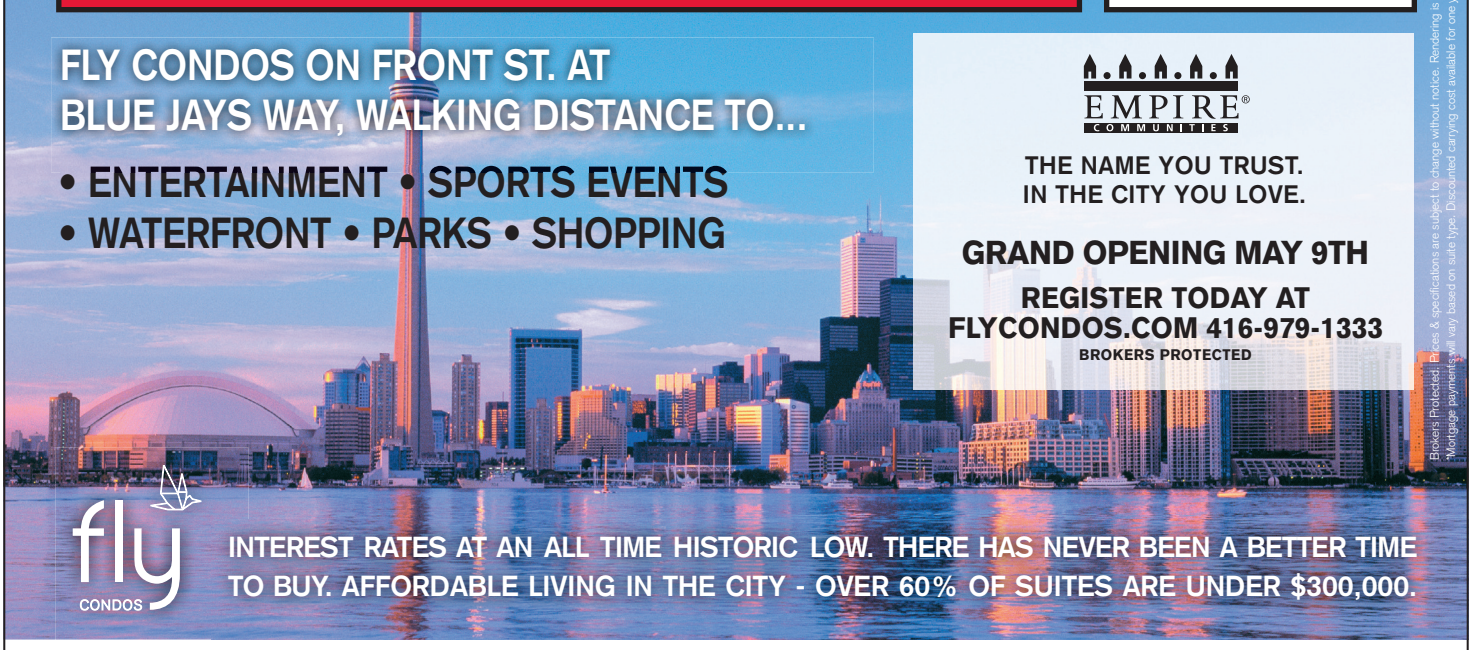

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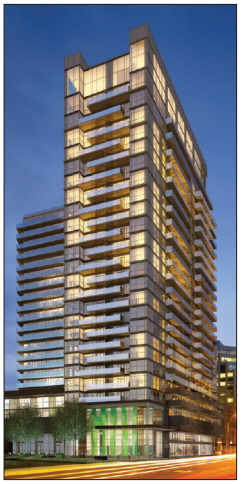

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FLY's location, lifestyle and price are creating a stir among all kinds of buyers.

Homesense Spring and Summer line
New lines of home decor items and motifs have arrived at Homesense stores across the country. Seen here are some decorative glass accents from the new Sleeping Patterns line. METRO NEWS SERVICES

Poised for poison plants

Lily-of-the-valley, clematis and chrysanthemums are attractive plants that can make your heart soar. Problem is, they're also capable of shutting it down.

All are commonly cultivated plants that are toxic if ingested by people or pets.

Just as many plants have the ability to heal, so thousands of ornamental plants have complex chemical compositions that make them capable of poisoning, said Michael Balick, vice-president and director of the Institute of Economic Botany at The New York Botanical Garden.

"The concept of poison and the concept of medicine are closely aligned," he said. "You're usually talking about dosage."

Digitalis is a prominent example, said Balick, co-author of the Handbook of Poisonous and Injurious Plants (The New York Botanical Garden Press and Springer, 2007).

"A certain dosage of the digitalis leaf could enable the pumping of the heart, where a larger dosage could kill a person," he said.

DEAN FOSDICK/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

DEAN FOSDICK/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Many wild and ornamental plants have a sinister side. The mountain laurel, left, (Kalmia Latifolia), characterized by its leathery evergreen leaves and pink and white flowers, is poisonous. Rhubarb leaves, right, are also poisonous despite the fact the stalks are perfectly edible.

There were 60,514 cases of unhealthy plant exposure reported in 2007 to poison-control centres in the United States, according to the federal Health Resources and Services Administration.

"This includes all routes of exposure, including swallowing plants, and skin reactions from such plants as poison ivy and poison oak," said David Bowman, an agency spokesman. Plants were cited in two fatalities.

Toxic plants do not pose as much danger as pharmaceuticals, but it pays to be cautious.

"Some plants can cause severe oral irritation if chewed," Bowman said. "Mistaking hemlock for carrots has been responsible for seizures and fatalities."

Many houseplants also are toxic.

"Chewing dieffenbachia or philodendron could cause oral irritation and swelling," he said. "Some other common indoor plants like African violet, jade plant and sanseveria are not poisonous but could cause stomach upset if swallowed."

If poison ivy or poison oak plants are burned, people inhaling the smoke could suffer the same ill effects in the respiratory tract as contact with the plants causes to the skin.

Reactions to plant toxicity range from minor to lethal, and also depend upon a person's health and age.

"Some people are more sensitive to things in the environment than others," said Rosie Lerner, an extension horticulturist with Purdue University.

Body weight plays a part, she said. Generally, the smaller the body, the less toxin required to make you ill.

"This is one reason why children are so vulnerable," she said. "An individual's metabolism also may play a role."

Proximity to poisonous plants doesn't mean people should shy away from gardening, Lerner said.

"A little common sense should prevail if you spend much time outdoors," she said. "Cover up. You should be wearing gloves anyway, to protect from cuts and scrapes that could lead to infection."

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Reduce the threat

There is no foolproof way to avoid poisonous plants. Perhaps the best course is to learn what varieties can harm people and pets, then decide if you want them on your property. Here's how to reduce risks:

- Accurate and timely identification will speed diagnosis if you call a poison control centre. Know the names of plants commonly found in and around your home. Email a photo of the suspect plant. Have some illustrated reference books on hand to help with recognition.
- Clear away berries, seeds or any other suspect plant material to prevent it from being eaten by children, livestock or pets.
- Some plants are toxic when rubbed against the skin, including poison ivy, poison oak, sumac, nettles and euphorbia. Reactions can vary from minor discomfort, inflammation and swelling to hospital stays.
- Many bulbs, seeds and plant parts (such as from lilies, castor beans or mushrooms) are extremely toxic.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

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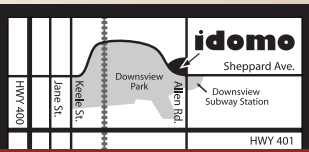

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Home Library

His favourites

BOOKS Carson Arthur, host of HGTV's Green Force, selects his top two books for outdoor spaces.

GARDEN DESIGN DETAILS by Arne Maynard, $39, HarperCollins, 2004. "For me, this is plant porn. When I need inspiration for those final touches, I look at this book. If you already have the bones of your garden in place and you want to add focal points … you'll find ideas (here)."

PATIO: GARDEN DESIGN & INSPIRATION by Jamie Durie, $48, Allen & Unwin, 2003. "For the longest time, landscaping and gardening in Canada has focused on a green lawn surrounded by perennial beds. But we're finally moving beyond that to create pockets of intimacy in our backyards. Incorporating intimacy into urban settings is Durie's specialty."

–JENN HOULIHAN

Bright ideas

VIRGINIA MCDONALD/FOR METRO TORONTO

Colourful lamps illuminate and pack a vivid punch, produced by Lauren Flanagan. From left: Mary-Kate and Ashley Continuum $80, Sears (sears.ca) • Lotte in Coral $190, Eye Spy (eyespygifts.com) • Havenhurst $520, Jonathan Adler (jonathanadler.com) • Ljusas Ysby $90, IKEA (ikea.ca) • Tracy Glover Bowtie $635, Hollace Cluny (hollacecluny.com). • Vintage yellow $295 per pair, Decorum Decorative Finds (Toronto, 416-966-6829) • Mitchell Gold + Bob Williams Nola $425, Elte (888-276-3583).

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Homesense Spring and Summer line
New lines of home decor items and motifs have arrived at Homesense stores across the country. Seen here are some high-gloss frames from the new Sleeping Patterns line. METRO NEWS SERVICES

The finished basement evolution

HomeScape

The basement started out with a dirt floor. It may even have been a crawl space that was used as a food cellar, a place to store potatoes and onions and preserves over the winter.

Then the dirt floor was covered up with concrete, but it was still a scary place, where the huge, fiery-eyed furnace hulked in the shadows and made funny noises. One or two bare bulbs barely lit the space. Often, low ceilings forced you to slouch. Sometimes, children were sent into the basement as punishment because it was such a frightening and unpleasant place.

But those days are over, thank goodness. At some point, people began to consider the basement's potential as more than a setting for a scary novel or a creepy movie. After all, it could increase your living space by a full floor, giving you lots more room to spread out. Who could resist?

By the time I arrived on the scene, a finished basement looked exactly like the one depicted in late 1970s Wayne's World skits — the infamous rec (wreck?) room of my youth. Some of you may remember the wall-to-wall shag carpeting, the wood paneling on every wall and the well-worn matching plaid sofa and armchair?

Precisely because of its slovenly charms, we teenagers would automatically head down to the basement. Here in this forgiving space, we could hang out undisturbed, watch TV, and eat snacks without fear of messing up the fussier spaces upstairs.

But things have changed in the world of finished basements. The ante has been upped, and the finished basement is becoming elegant and stylish. It looks more like a bona fide part of the house, no longer the make-do space it used to be.

The design is often customized, and people are designing with their hobbies in mind.

Some people want a mini-gym, or a yoga studio, or a painting studio, depending on their interests. Others decide they want a playroom for the children, an office, a home theatre room, a guest suite, even a place for the "band" to rehearse.

But before you go off and renovate, make sure you tackle the three scourges of finished basements—dampness, lack of light and lack of warmth. Remember that a basement is, in fact, built into a hole in the earth and you must come up with ways to get around the natural disadvantages inherent in this reality.

Sylvia Putz is a journalist with an interest in decor and design. She's written for the TV show Arresting Design; sputz@arrestingdesign.com.

Low down on the underground

- Most important is the requirement for a dry basement. Guard at all times against seeping or flooding water during times of excessive rainfall, since this can thoroughly ruin finishes. Get waterproofing if you need it, and use floor insulation that allows drainage. But beware as well the invisible dampness (and resulting "wet dog" smell and nasty mould) that results from condensation of water from humid air. Like a tall cool glass of iced tea, naturally cool basement walls and floors can become wet and slick with moisture during times of humidity. A dehumidifier is also an excellent idea.
- A dark dingy basement with small high windows is also undesirable, so basement renovators often consider larger or additional windows to make the space feel less like a basement. If budgets do not allow this, make sure to put in adequate artificial lighting, so the space feels inviting. Treating the existing windows with window treatments that extend to the floor can also help create the illusion of larger windows.
- While coolness may be lovely in the summer, a cold basement during the cooler seasons will quickly send everybody scurrying upstairs where it is warmer. If you've got forced air heating, consider putting in a cold air returns near the floor of the basement to ensure the proper flow of heated air. Also consider a gas or electric fireplace that heats the air when needed.

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Homesense Spring and Summer line
Seen here is an ottoman from the new Sleeping Patterns line. METRO NEWS SERVICES

Cheap house for sale was an illegal abode

LegalMatters

Jeffrey D. Cowan
jeff@cowanandtaylor.com

Q I recently discovered a house available for sale in Toronto for a great price and met with the owner to execute a private sale agreement that was drafted by his lawyer. It had some strange clauses in it with respect to environmental due diligence so I took it to my lawyer and we reviewed it in detail. Immediately, my lawyer raised a flag on the environmental clauses, which are not a usual provision in an Agreement of Purchase and Sale for a residential property in Toronto. Also, he was concerned I had not seen the interior of the house as apparently 'the bank had locked it up' because payments had not been made. How do I proceed with this?

A I would have smelled a rat the minute that my client indicated the vendor didn't have access to his own home, it was going for what appeared to be a bargain rate considering the neighbourhood and the fact that he had unusual environmental clauses in the schedule.

In the end, the lawyer immediately called the vendor's lawyer and said that he had used a pro-forma Agreement of Purchase and Sale for cottages, which often have environmental audits involved in them. Still he wasn't satisfied and instructed the client to have the environmental provisions deleted before he provided a deposit.

Enter the quick-witted law clerk who examined the title the next day. She provided the requisitions to the vendor's lawyer who stated that the environmental provisions should remain because of extenuating circumstances. After much digging and research, it was discovered that the house had been used as a marijuana 'grow op' and that the city had impounded the property (and there would probably be a court order registered against the property in short order). The purchaser would have had a major problem if he had given a deposit and made a firm deal with the vendor.

I suppose that the fact that the property had been used for illegal purposes would have been an out for the purchaser at the end of the day but then comes the problem of getting the deposit monies back from someone who obviously had no moral compunction.

Lesson to be learned: If it seems too good to be true, it probably is. Buyer beware! (For you budding lawyers a qualified, caveat emptor.)

Jeffrey D. Cowan is with Cowan & Taylor, Barristers & Solicitors. The info in this article should not be relied upon as legal advice.

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The buy-sell process explained

It seems that the most common instance of purchasing in today's market has become cases where the purchasers are also sellers of their existing home. In other words, many home owners are taking advantage of the favourable spread between the home they are selling and the one they plan to buy, in a market that has allowed for such a beneficial practice to be relatively easy to achieve. So where do you begin, if you're looking to jump on this buy and sell bandwagon? A wise man once said that even the longest journey begins with a single step. Here's a look at that first step, as well as the ones that follow.

The first thing you will want to do is get a realistic assessment for your existing home. A word of caution — those realtors that come knocking at your door, or ringing you phone line, promising returns that even you, the owner, feel are ambitious are not offering you a realistic, accurate valuation. I cannot stress enough how important it is to use a realtor that you can trust; one that comes from a trustworthy source even after their deal has closed, especially in the instance where you are buying and selling. Your accurate assessment will mean understanding the most recent sold comparables as well as your home's current competition. The assessment phase should include a goal sale price as well as a modest worst-case scenario sale price. Then and only then can you intelligently make a decision on whether or not to move forward. If you're anything like most Torontonians partaking in the buy-and-sell practice, you need to know how much you'll get from your current home before exploring the options on your next home.

So, now you have a very good idea of how much you will achieve on your current home. Using that figure, you are now able to go to your bank, or the lending broker of your choice, and ascertain your mortgage and purchase price options. Once you know the price comfort range of your home-to-be, you can get into some of the tasks on the more fun side of the spectrum. This means going through homes that your realtor sends you that fit all your wants and needs.

Your next step, in many instances even prior to putting your home up for sale, is to actually go and visit a significant number of potential new dwellings, to better determine if what you're looking for is actually available, and at a comfortable price. Only then can you fully make a decision on whether or not to proceed with the sale of your residence.

"I'll say it again, there's absolutely no sense in listing a home that is not 110 per cent ready to sell from every angle possible."

Assuming you've made the decision to move forward, now comes perhaps the most crucial step — listing your home. I've said it before and I'll say it again, there's absolutely no sense in listing a home that is not 110 per cent ready to sell from every angle possible.

From there, ensuring that the sale of your current house or condo and the purchase of your new home go smooth from all perspectives — the time frames, the conditional periods, the closing dates, etc. — is the job of your realtor. He/She should be able to explain how and why they expect to be able to achieve this for you at your first meeting and then, if your friends/family have referred wisely, they should be able to carry it out for you when hypothetical's become reality.

It is certainly important to understand that the process of buying and selling simultaneously is not one to be taken lightly. However, when the journey is taken one intelligent, sure-footed step at a time, it can certainly lead you to the promise land. Happy Hunting. With any questions feel free to email Amit at amitp@rogers.com.

Amit is a Realtor/Developer with Re/Max. amitp@rogers.com

There's a lot of money flying around these days when the purchasers are also sellers of their existing home.

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Lil Wayne launches suit

Lil Wayne has filed a lawsuit against a producer who used a sample for a song without permission. According to the suit, Wayne's lawyers claim Rock Productions produced the rapper's song I Feel Like Dying and was responsible for obtaining any necessary licensing agreements. METRO NEWS SERVICES

Entertainment

Twin girls

It'll be a girl – and a girl! – for Sarah Jessica Parker and Matthew Broderick. The couple are expecting twin daughters later this summer "with the generous help of a surrogate." PEOPLE.COM

EDITOR: DEAN.LISK@METRONEWS.CA

●●●●● A CLASSIC; ●●●● EXCELLENT; ●●● GOOD; ●● FAIR; ● POOR

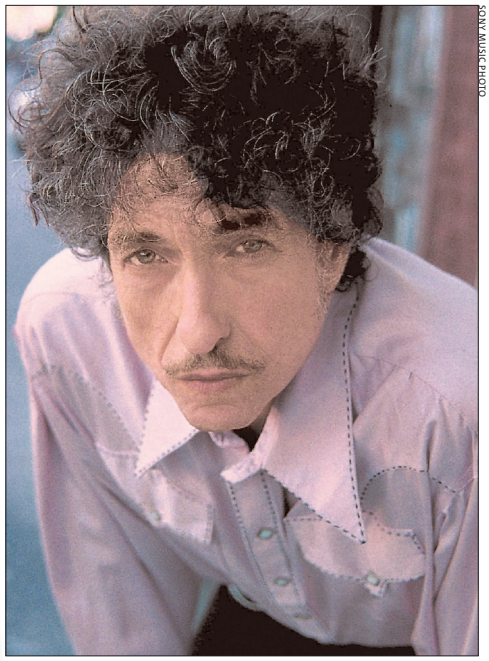
Life's all good for Bob Dylan

Bob Dylan

Album: Together Through Life
Label: Columbia/Sony
Rating: ●●●½

THESE ARE DIFFICULT times in which we live, especially for those of us peeking around the far corner of life. We're watching the landscapes in which we grew up turn to rust and finding the dark side of the people with whom we've entrusted our dreams. Whether by plan or coincidence, the poet grapples here with a greying world that seems barren of meaning or answers. The song titles of the opening tracks — Beyond Here Lies Nothin', Life Is Hard, (Hell Is) My Wife's Hometown — relate a foreboding but familiar story. With the help of Grateful Dead lyricist Robert Hunter, Dylan presents us with a script for the late stages of life, blemished and filled with bitterness. He offers it up in the only way his ragged, grating voice can still sound vital — as a blues singer (with credit to Willie Dixon), howling at forces we've never been able to control. And the blues come easy to his always-expert band, buoyed by the accordion of Los Lobo David Hildago and accented by the caustic guitar of Mike Campbell. But there's always hope, even with Dylan, even in these troubled times. As the closing track of the album states, It's All Good.

Graham Rockingham/for Metro Canada



SONY MUSIC PHOTO

Together Through Life is the latest album from Bob Dylan.

MusicReviews

music@metronews.ca

The Ghost is Dancing

Album: Battles On
Label: Sonic Unyon
Rating: ●●●●

TORONTO'S MUSIC SCENE is filled with bands you've never heard of, unless you've spent some time around the city's clubs. The Ghost is Dancing is one of those acts — they've got a following in the T-Dot, but they're still making a name for themselves everywhere else. The group's sophomore record takes a big step in the right direction, and will likely earn plenty of followers. Battles On is loaded with sweeping choruses, loud, layered riffs and a well-honed indie rock sensibility. While they're not that different from other campus charting acts, they churn out enough singalong melodies to set them apart.

THE GHOST IS DANCING BATTLES ON

Bryan Borzykowski/for Metro Canada

Art Brut

Album: Art Brut vs. Satan
Label: Downtown
Rating: ●●●

IT'S NOT EVERY day that a British rock band makes people laugh, but Art Brut's new creation might be the most hilarious album of the year. Lead singer Eddie Argos takes aim at everything from U2 and weird bruises, but he saves his best lines for the record buying masses —"How can you sleep at night when nobody likes the music we like? Record buying public, we hate them!" There are plenty of other gems, especially on DC Comics and Chocolate Milkshake. Musically, it's not the most moving stuff — talk-ish melodies over unmemorable instrumentation — but this disc is too humorous to miss.

Bryan Borzykowski/for Metro Canada

Patrick Watson

Album: Wooden Arms
Label: Secret City Recordings
Rating: ●●●

THIS IS ONE of those arty records that many people "in the know" will pay homage to, but few will actually listen to more than once. It's the sort of thing you pull out late at night when you're stuck at home and the rain is hammering against the window. Watson is a fine pianist and he's got some extraordinary musicians backing him up, especially drummer Robbie Kuster and guitarist Simon Angell. There are patches of brilliance throughout this ambitious piece of chamber pop. But Watson, who won the Polaris Music Prize in 2007, deals more with atmospherics than melody. Fluttering violins, dancing harps and cartoon sound effects are all nice, but only the country-flavoured Big Bird In A Small Cage really breaks through. And that's due to an infectious banjo from Angell and some welcome vocal assistance from Katie Moore. This could do with a little more melody and a lot less ambience.

Graham Rockingham/for Metro Canada

On the web

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Big news ...
Mr. Big is back. Chris Noth, who has played Carrie Bradshaw's love interest in the past, has joined the cast of Sex and the City 2, the sequel to last year's smash. EMPIREONLINE.COM

Steady as she goes

Silversun Pickups are content to stay off the trend rollercoaster

BRIAN COULTON
for Metro Canada

Some things never change. At least that appears to be the running theme surrounding Los Angeles alternative shoegazers, Silversun Pickups.

The band's been active for almost 10 years. And in that time, it's gone from the cusp of hip to... the cusp of hip. "We were always the band opening up for the new hip thing," says Brian Aubert, the band's fronting vocalist and guitarist. "We would play and they would play and six months later, that scene was dead. That band would change their haircuts and reinvent themselves, and we would still open for them."

But despite the band's seemingly static state, Aubert says he's quite comfortable with the perpetuation. "You don't want to live and die by a scene."

Silversun Pickups may be through with the scene, but the scene's not through with them. The foursome just wrapped two sets at the touted South by Southwest music festival in Austin, Texas, four dates in London, and a spot at Coachella in California — all after taking an eight-month performance hiatus.

And while Aubert admits the band didn't fare too well when they first returned to the stage, he says it quickly got back on the bike. "We did a show in Kansas City before South by Southwest. I think, two days before that, it started to feel good ... which is cutting it close," he says with a laugh. "We're a live band. We could sit in that rehearsal space all day long, and it just doesn't feel the same. You've just got to kind of play to get good at it."

The Silversun Pickups has been active almost 10 years.

While performance context and performing itself remain relatively the same for Silversun Pickups, such is not the case for the band's music. It's built a history of dreamy shoegaze pop, with ample sonic sounds and pieces of dramatic instrumental climax. But on its new album Swoon, Silversun Pickups are picking up those pieces and running with them.

"We wanted to push things further in both directions — more chaotic (and) more crazy but a lot more moodier, quieter and prettier," says Aubert.

"I found I was trying to extract more emotion and more heightened sonics out of the older material, which I think could probably be a bad thing. That's how we started making Swoon — knowing where we wanted to go that we weren't going before."

"You don't want to live and die by a scene." Brian Aubert

Where are Silversun Pickups going? Aubert says when the band started making records, it never really considered any amount of success would propel it to this level.

"'This five minute, 56 second song will be totally huge!'" he jokes, "We just don't think about it like that." Instead, Aubert chalks the band's past and future up to chance.

"True, when luck comes you have to be prepared. But it's luck nonetheless. Hopefully your feet are on the right soil."

Tony Bennett donates painting of jazz great Duke Ellington

MUSIC Tony Bennett donated a watercolour he made of longtime friend Duke Ellington to a Smithsonian museum yesterday, the 110th anniversary of the jazz great's birth. The painting depicts Ellington with a bouquet of roses in the background. The jazz musician made a habit of sending Bennett a dozen roses when he wrote a new tune in hopes that Bennett would record the piece. "Every time the roses came, I said 'Oh, Duke wrote another song,'" Bennett said.

The 15-time Grammy Award-winning singer said Ellington told him years ago to maintain a second art form beyond music.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Maxwell admits to being insecure

MUSIC Maxwell may appear smooth and suave onstage but the soul singer says he's actually insecure — so a concert tour last fall helped boost his confidence about releasing a new album. The tour also gave him a lot of inspiration for his new CD, BLACKsummers'night, to be released July 7. It's his first album in almost 10 years. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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Hockey mom to motorcycle maven

Alaska Gov. Sarah Palin recently welcomed the crew from Orange County Choppers to Anchorage, where show star Paul Teutul Sr. researched building a bike to honour Alaska's 50-year anniversary of being a state. **PEOPLE.COM**

Mr. T called up for jury duty

PEOPLE Pity the prospective juror named Mr. T.

He showed up for jury duty, then was dismissed after hours of down time — which he used to sign autographs and pose for pictures.

Mr. T was called for jury duty at Cook County Circuit Court on Monday.

The Chicago native said he enjoyed fulfilling his civic responsibilities, even though he found that hours can pass before a judge decides to dismiss you. **THE ASSOCIATED PRESS**

Wolverine's secret endings

MOVIES Fans of Wolverine who watched the online leak of the film won't miss one thing by skipping the theatre — they'll miss at least two.

Hugh Jackman

Director Gavin Hood says the theatrical version of X-Men Origins: Wolverine, due out Friday, features two different Easter egg' endings. The short bits of footage play after the credits and reveal important information about key characters. Hood says the two endings play on separate prints, so different theatres may show different footage.

The full-length work print leaked last month has a different ending than the one recently screened for reporters.

X-Men Origins: Wolverine stars Hugh Jackman, Liev Schreiber and will.i.am. **THE ASSOCIATED PRESS**

Chan says 100th movie will be directorial effort

Jackie Chan has celebrated a milestone with the announcement of his 100th movie project — a collaboration with Rumble in the Bronx director Stanley Tong.

GETTY IMAGES

Action star Jackie Chan said on his website that he will co-direct a new film tentatively called Chinese Zodiac.

The 55-year-old Rush Hour star said on his website he will co-direct the film tentatively called Chinese Zodiac with Tong, with shooting to take place in China, Austria and France.

The brief statement seen Wednesday did not give further details.

Tong, whose credits include the TV series Martial Law and the comedy movie Mr. Magoo, directed Chan in the 1995 action film Rumble in the Bronx and the 2005 fantasy The Myth.

Chan's main spokesman, Solon So, said Chan will invest in the movie with his frequent partner, Hong Kong-based Emperor Motion Pictures.

He declined to reveal the plot or budget.

Chan's most recent release was the Chinese-language gangster thriller Shinjuku Incident, in which he plays a Chinese immigrant who becomes a hit man for the Japanese mafia.

His upcoming films are the Hollywood action comedy The Spy Next Door, about an undercover Chinese spy whose cover is blown, and another Chinese production, Big Soldier, reportedly about the friendship between two soldiers set in China's ancient Qin dynasty.

The veteran action star has also been in talks to star as the Mr. Miyagi character in a remake of The Karate Kid, the 1984 film about a mentor who teaches a youngster how to stand up to bullies.

Chan recently caused an uproar by saying at a business forum that freedom may not be a good thing for authoritarian mainland China. Critics called his comments an insult to the Chinese people.

So said afterward that Chan's comments were taken out of context and that the actor was referring to freedom in the entertainment industry and not Chinese society at large. **THE ASSOCIATED PRESS**

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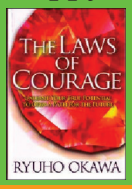

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Michelle Obama joins People's "most beautiful" list
U.S. first lady Michelle Obama made the list in People magazine's 100 most beautiful people issue, which hits newsstands tomorrow. Breast cancer survivor and actress Christina Applegate graces the magazine's cover. METRO NEWS SERVICES

Wall Street 2 in works

Michael Douglas and Oliver Stone are going to show us the money again with a sequel to their 1987 hit Wall Street.

Douglas is reprising his role as Gordon Gekko and Stone is on board again to direct the sequel, which for now has the working title Wall Street 2, said 20th Century Fox spokesman Gregg Brilliant.

Brilliant said the project is timely and relevant given the state of the world.

"We need to keep the story line under wraps, but it's literally ripped from today's headlines," Brilliant said. "It's going to be very big and very cool."

Michael Douglas

With the economy and financial markets in a tailspin, it will be different times for Douglas' Gekko. In the original film, corporate raider Gekko was a symbol of Wall Street greed and corruption during the boom era of the 1980s.

Gekko has endured because audiences give him the "same kind of respect we've got for the great white shark," Douglas said in a recent interview with Associated Press Television News for his upcoming life-achievement award from the American Film Institute.

"He's a villain. Gordon Gekko is a great, old-fashioned villain," Douglas said. "And, interestingly enough, if you look at most actors' careers, their biggest achievement, not necessarily success, but (achievement), is playing a bad guy."

Academy Awards voters agreed. Douglas earned the best actor Oscar for Gekko.

The sequel is scheduled to start shooting this summer. Edward Pressman, who produced Wall Street,' also is back for the sequel, while Allan Loeb (21) wrote the screenplay.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Earth cash goes to trees

STUDIO Walt Disney Studios is turning box-office cash from its nature documentary Earth into seed money to plant trees in the rain forest.

Disney had announced it would plant one tree in Brazil's endangered Atlantic rain forest for every viewer who saw the movie during its first week. According to Disney, the box-office tally hit US$16.1 million, which translates to 2.7 million trees.

The trees are being planted by the Nature Conservancy, which is trying to replant more than one million hectares of rain forest.

Earth is narrated by James Earl Jones and follows a year in the lives of three families of polar bears, elephants and humpback whales.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Entertainment in brief

ACCUSED An ambulance driver and a former senator have pleaded not guilty to charges that they tried to extort $25 million US from actor John Travolta following the death of his teenage son in the Bahamas.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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Hills returning in fall

MTV will air the second half of the fifth season of The Hills this fall. Leading lady Lauren Conrad, however, will not appear in the new episodes. TVGUIDE.COM

Keeping alive Chuck

Fans eat subs, use Twitter to save NBC show

When it comes to saving the TV series Chuck from cancellation, fans are putting their money — and submarine sandwiches — where their mouths are.

With NBC still deciding whether to order a third season of the show — a spy/comedy/romance hybrid that aired its second season finale on Monday — fans and TV critics have united with a spirited online campaign to save the series from extinction.

Chuck, which airs on Citytv in Canada, was one of the trendiest topics on Twitter Monday night, ranked only behind information on the swine flu outbreak, while an online petition to keep the show on the air counted more than 7,600 signatures by Tuesday afternoon.

NBC has said it will make a decision on the future of Chuck by next week.

Fans urged each other to pack Subway restaurants Monday as part of a campaign to save the show by boosting one of its primary advertisers. Their strategy was to buy a footlong Subway sandwich then fill out a comment card crediting Chuck with the purchase.

Why? Because Chuck has featured some cheeky product placements for Subway.

Though a spokesman for the restaurant chain declined to provide hard sales numbers, he said there was evidence the campaign boosted sales.

"I heard a few anecdotal reports of lines out the door at a few Subway locations yesterday," wrote Subway Franchisee Advertising Fund Trust public relations manager Mack Bridenbaker in an e-mail.

The show's star, Zachary Levi, gave the campaign a boost when he led hundreds of fans to a Subway in Birmingham, England over the weekend, before stepping behind the counter to personally assemble the sandwiches.

"You see, NBC? This is what happens when you might cancel a show that people care about," he said in the clip, which has been uploaded to YouTube.

Fans have also been sending boxes of Nerds candy to NBC — an idea that came directly from co-creator Josh Schwartz in a recent interview.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

HANDOUT/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Zachary Levy stars in the NBC show Chuck, which aired its final episode of the second season on Monday.

Back to Jericho

- It's not the first time fans have gone to outlandish lengths to save a show. In 2007, fans of Jericho protested the show's cancellation by inundating the CBS offices with 18 tonnes of peanuts, based on a throwaway line in the show. CBS eventually brought the show back, only to cancel it swiftly the next season.

TO	Vu	SC	C	7:00	7:30	8:00	8:30	9:00	9:30	10:00	10:30	11:00
4/30/09 primetime	265	353	2 TVO	Megastructures		The Agenda With Steve Paikin		*Empz 4 Life* (2006, Documentary) Sadiki Clarke.				Agenda-Paikin
	211	331	3 GTV	ET Canada	Entertainment	Survivor: Tocantins (N)		The Office (N)	Kink in Hair	(10:01) Harper's Island (N)		News
	215	343	4 OMN1	2Half Men	The Simpsons	News (N)		Vivere Il	News (N)	The Simpsons	King of the Hill	Metropia
	210	302	6 CBC	NHL Hockey Playoffs -- Teams TBA. (HDTV) (Live)						CBC News: The National		The Hour
	214	344	7 CITY	Law & Order: SVU		Ugly Betty "Rabbit Test"		In Motherhood	30 Rock	Hell's Kitchen (N)		News (N)
	212	313	8 CTV	etalk	Hollywood	CSI: Crime Scene Invstgtn.		Grey's Anatomy (N)		Southland (HDTV) (N)		News (N)
	218	345	11 E!	The Insider (N)	E! News	Name Is Earl	10 Items-Less	The E! True Hollywood Story		Party Monsters: Cabo		News (N)
	137	763	13 TFO	Panorama		Louis Hémon		*Voyage en Italie* (1953, Drame sentimental)			Folie-aventure	Volt
	-	-	14 -	Raymond	Raymond	News (N)		News (N)		Two/Half Men	King	Cold Case
	213	326	15 SUN	Scrubs	George Lopez	Smallville "Beast" (N)		Supernatural (HDTV) (N)		To Serve and Protect		Becker
	-	387	16 CBS	Inside Edition	Hollywood	Survivor: Tocantins (N)		CSI: Crime Scene Invstgtn.		(10:01) Harper's Island (N)		News (N)
	-	385	17 NBC	The Insider (N)	Entertainment	Name Is Earl	Parks-Recreat	The Office (N)	30 Rock	Southland (HDTV) (N)		News (N)
	-	386	18 ABC	Wheel-Fortune	Jeopardy! (N)	Ugly Betty "Rabbit Test"		Grey's Anatomy (N)		(10:02) Private Practice (N)		News (N)
	219	346	20 ACH-B	Instant Star	TMZ (N)	Old Christine	Old Christine	America's Next Top Model		(10:02) Private Practice (N)		News (N)
	-	-	28 FOX	Judge Judy (N)	Two/Half Men	Bones (HDTV PA) (N)		Hell's Kitchen (N)		Seinfeld	Two/Half Men	The Simpsons
	-	388	61 PBS	News-Lehrer	Goodnight Swt.	Doc Martin		Story of God		MI-5 "President's Visit"		Business Rpt.
	297	652	330 WPX	Two/Half Men	Family Guy	Smallville "Beast" (N)		Supernatural (HDTV) (N)		PIX News at Ten Tong.		Two/Half Men
	296	654	331 SBK	Wheel-Fortune	Jeopardy! (N)	Dr. Phil (HDTV)		WBZ News (N)	'70s Show	Frasier	Frasier	Punk'd
	298	653	332 TLA	Jamie Foxx	Wayans Bros.	My Wife-Kids	According-Jim	Friends	KTLA News	Two/Half Men	Two/Half Men	Smallville
news	502	390	26 NW	CBC News	Newman	Planet Earth		CBC News: The National		CBC News: The National		National
	500	500	33 CNN	Lou Dobbs Tonight		Campbell Brown: No Bias		Larry King Live (N)		Anderson Cooper 360 (HDTV)		
	509	504	79 CNB	Kudlow Report		CNBC Reports (HDTV)		Run for the Roses		On the Money		Mad Money
sports	405	417	22 net	MLB Baseball Los Angeles Angels of Anaheim at New York Yankees. (HDTV) (Live)						Sportsnet Connected		Hockey Central
	400	400	30 TSN	NHL Hockey Playoffs -- Teams TBA. (HDTV) (Live)						SportsCentre (HDTV) (Live)		
	411	457	58 OLN	Bounty Hunter	Bounty Hunter	Departures		Mantracker		Bounty Hunter	Bounty Hunter	Departures
	417	406	81 SC	Bullrun (HDTV)		Bullrun (HDTV)		Bullrun (HDTV)		Bullrun (HDTV) (N)		Pimp My Ride
family	551	542	25 YTV	True Jackson	H2O, Just Add	Malcolm-Mid.	Futurama	In Real Life "Dirty Jobs"		Falcon Beach		Mystery Hnt.
	554	544	45 TEL	Totally Spies	Total Drama	6TEEN	6TEEN	Futurama	*Tank Girl* ★ (1995, Science Fiction) Lori Petty, Ice-T.			
	556	540	51 FAM	Wizards-Place	Han. Montana	Zack & Cody	Latest Buzz	Wizards-Place	Life Derek	Ned's School	Cory in House	Zack & Cody
cable variety	602	567	27 W	Will & Grace	Friends	Divine Design	House	Confidential	Save Us-House	Divine Design	Love It-List It	House
	570	580	29 MM	The O.C. "The Debut"		Technical	Technical Diff.	Daddy's Girls	Degrassi: TNG	MuchTopTens		MuchOnDem
	615	520	31 A&E	CSI: Miami "Silencer"		The First 48 (HDTV)		The First 48 (HDTV)		The First 48 (HDTV)		The First 48
	700	800	35 TLN	Centrovetrine	Sky TG 24	Io e Mamma (Italian).				Raymond	Raymond	George Lopez
	571	581	36 MMM	The Daily Fix		Ranked!		AC/DC: No Bull		Entourage	Gene Simmons	The Daily Fix
	575	583	38 CMT	CMT Star Crossed		CMT at the 2008 CCMA's		Reba	Reba	Hope & Faith	Hope & Faith	Gone Country
	616	521	39 SHO	The Outer Limits		Love-Death	Love-Death	Trailer Park	Trailer Park	*Catwoman* ★ (2004, Action) Halle Berry.		
	620	523	40 BVO	Camera	Snapshot	Bathroom Divas-Opera Star		*Tales of the Rat Fink* (2006, Documentary) (DVS)				Law & Order
	601	562	41 SLC	Skin Deep	Til Debt-Part	X-Weighted "Sarah"		X-Weighted		X-Weighted		ET Canada
	522	506	43 HIS	NCIS "Internal Affairs"		Ancient Discoveries		Go Deep "Panama"		NCIS "Internal Affairs"		Ship of Ice
	625	548	44 COM	Air Farce	Just for Laughs		Corner Gas	The Simpsons	South Park	VIP	Extreme Wind	Daily Show
	600	564	46 H&G	House Hunters	Property Virgin	Holmes in New Orleans		Disaster DIY	Big Amazing	House Hunters	House Hunters	HolmesOrleans
	294	529	47 TBS	House-Payne	House-Payne	Friends	Friends	Friends	Friends	*Shrek* ★★★ (2001, Comedy)		
	576	582	49 BET	106 & Park: BET's Top 10 Live		*Undisputed* ★★ (2002, Drama) Wesley Snipes.				College Hill	College Hill	*Undisputed*
	627	528	50 SPC	Chuck (N)		*Star Trek V: The Final Frontier* ★★ (1989, Science Fiction)					Stormworld	Stargate SG-1
	581	566	52 MTV	Mom & Dad	After	Canada's Next Top Model		The Hills	The Hills	Taking the Stage (N)		MTV Live
	618	524	54 TROP	Vanity Insanity	Inside Hollywood		Seinfeld	Seinfeld	Raymond	Family Guy	Married... With	Seinfeld
	603	561	56 FOOD	Chef at Home	Exotic	Restaurant Makeover		Chef Jeff Project		Ace of Cakes	Ace of Cakes	Chef Abroad
	261	394	60 V	Murder, She Wrote		Wait for God	'Allo, 'Allo!	*On the Waterfront* ★★★★ (1954, Drama), Karl Malden				Poltergeist
	621	527	63 STR	The Ellen DeGeneres Show (N)		TMZ (N)	etalk	American Idol Extra (N)		The Tonight Show-Jay Leno		TMZ
	553	546	65 TRE	Backyardigans	Nght Grdn	Max & Ruby	Franklin	Little Bear	Maggie-Beast	Comfy Couch	Zigby	Max & Ruby
	115	711	101 TVA	Dépenses xtr	Histoires-filles	Dr. House (HDTV) (SC)		Destination Nor'Ouest (SC)		TVA 22 heures	(10:45) Denis Lévesque	
	126	730	102 RDI	24 Heures en 60 minutes		Grands reportages (SC)		Le Téléjournal (SC)		RDI en direct	Le National	Le Téléjournal
	526	507	249 VIVA	Judging Amy		Most Haunted		Most Haunted		Passion	Homicide File	Psychic Inv.
	300	601	301 M1	*Stardust*	*American Venus* ★★ (2007, Drama)			*The Lazarus Project* (2008, Suspense)			(10:45) *Prom Night*	
	305	612	306 PIX	(6:20) *The Alamo* ★★★ (1960, Historical Drama)				*Training Day* ★★★ (2001, Crime Drama), Ethan Hawke				*Platoon*

critics'corner

Bones

After a dead fraternity brother is found inside the mascot uniform of a rival school, Bones and Booth (Emily Deschanel, David Boreanaz) discover the victim had a shady operation going on the side. Booth offers to help his brother Jared (guest star Brendan Fehr) get a job despite a dishonorable discharge from the Navy. Michaela Conlin also stars in the new episode "The Beaver in the Otter." 8 PM on FOX

Southland

The body of an unidentified woman found in an alley is used for target practice by gang members. Nate's (Kevin Alejandro) little sister goes missing, and secrets from his past are revealed. Russell (Tom Everett Scott) is miffed by Lydia's (Regina King) suggestion that he crossed some personal boundaries while consulting with a victim's sister. Michael McGrady also stars in the new episode "Sally in the Alley." 10 PM on CTV

Trump show returning for 9th

SERIES NBC says Donald Trump will be firing more stars next year when Celebrity Apprentice returns for another round. The network is announcing a ninth season for the reality series, scheduled to air in spring 2010. The finale for the current season airs May 10. Clint Black, Annie Duke, Jesse James, Brande Roderick and Joan Rivers are the remaining contenders.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Prison Break actor out of jail

PEOPLE Lane Garrison, who was serving a sentence of three years and four months for a drunken driving crash, has been released from prison. The former Prison Break actor was paroled yesterday.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Kenya's Style

Kenya Hunt

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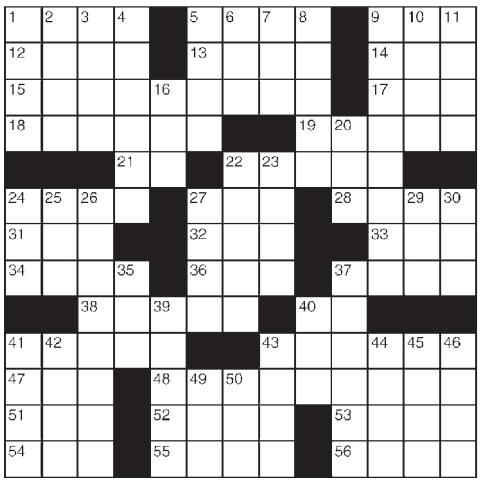


Crossword across

1 From square one
5 Orsk's river
9 Bumped into
12 — noire
13 Narc's measure
14 Skilled fighter pilot
15 February 2
17 That lass
18 Puts on a show
19 Salts town
21 Ego counterpart
22 Binge
24 Base runner's goal
27 "I — Camera"
28 Rodents do it
31 Playwright Levin
32 Folk-song mule
33 Bambi's aunt
34 Network
36 Doctrine
37 Charon's river
38 Ark contents
40 Apr., e.g.
41 Verify
43 Motion picture industry
47 Disencumber
48 Complete views
51 Commotion
52 Wreck
53 Stopwatch noise
54 Chaps
55 Look lecherously
56 Belligerent deity

Crossword down

1 Rudiments
2 Spruce
3 Sicilian spouter
4 Shoe with triangular sole
5 Mandolins' kin
6 Edge
7 Carte intro
8 Also-ran
9 "Le Cid" composer
10 Musical comeback
11 Abound
16 Opened
20 Cribbage scorer
22 Huge hit
23 Good place to get a date
24 That guy
25 Tramcar contents
26 Elephant's ancestor
27 — Minor
29 One or more
30 Main ingredient in lipstick
35 Carpool-lane abbr.
37 Beethoven piece
39 Copy
40 "Bei — Bist du Schön"
41 Baby carriage
42 Carnival attraction
43 Traffic pylon
44 Eastern potentate
45 Pepper spray
46 Requests
49 Summertime mo.
50 Zero

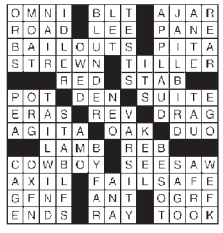
Sudoku

For more/less challenging Sudoku puzzles, visit metronews.ca

HOW TO PLAY: Digits 1 through 9 will appear once in each zone – one zone is an outlined 3x3 grid within the larger puzzle grid. There are nine zones in the puzzle. Do not enter a digit into a box if it already appears elsewhere in the same zone, row across or column down the entire puzzle.

			4		2			8
2	5		6			1		
	4		8					
						4		7
9	6						5	1
8		3						
					5		1	
		6			9		2	4
5			3		7			

PREVIOUS DAY'S CROSSWORD AND SUDOKU ANSWERS:



1	7	2	6	4	8	3	5	9
4	9	5	1	3	7	6	8	2
8	6	3	2	9	5	1	4	7
2	3	6	7	5	4	8	9	1
9	5	4	8	6	1	2	7	3
7	1	8	9	2	3	4	6	5
6	4	1	3	7	9	5	2	8
3	2	7	5	8	6	9	1	4
5	8	9	4	1	2	7	3	6

Find today's answers + play more games at metronews.ca

SUDOKU SOLVE TIME:

Under 13 min .....Genius
13-17 min.....Scholar
17-21 min .....Smart
21-25 min.....Not bad
25+ min.....Keep practising

Metro Recipe of the Day

Spanish Rice with Chorizo and Sage

INGREDIENTS:
1 1/4 cups (300 ml) chicken stock
2 tbsp (25 ml) olive oil
1 medium red onion
1 clove garlic
1 medium red pepper
1 cup (250 ml) long-grain rice
1 tsp (5 ml) turmeric
1 can (19 oz / 540 ml) chopped tomatoes
Salt and black pepper
6 oz (170 g) chorizo sausage or spicy salami
Small bunch of fresh sage
6 oz (170 g) frozen peas

METHOD:
1. Heat chicken stock in small pot. Heat olive oil in wide frying pan.
2. Peel and chop onion and garlic, add them to frying pan, and cook over moderately high heat until onion is soft, stirring frequently, 3 minutes.
3. While onion and garlic are frying, rinse, halve, deseed and roughly chop pepper. Add to pan with rice and turmeric, and stir-fry 3 minutes.
4. Add heated stock, canned tomatoes and their juice, and season to taste. Bring to boil, reduce heat, cover and simmer, stirring occasionally, 5 minutes.
5. Cut chorizo sausage into fairly thick chunks, then stir into rice and continue cooking 5 minutes.
6. Rinse and roughly chop sage and add to rice, with peas. Return to boil, then reduce heat, and simmer until rice is tender and has mostly absorbed liquid, 5 minutes. If mixture dries out before rice is cooked, add more stock, or some dry white wine. Serve hot.

SERVES 4

rd.ca
For nutritional information on this and other great recipes, go to **rd.ca** or check out **Key Ingredients in this month's Reader's Digest, on newsstands now!**

Horoscopes

AVATAR VENUS

ARIES
MARCH 21-APRIL 20
Knowledge of a romance can cause suffering. A friend's respect brings out your good side. A forced move is not productive.

TAURUS
APRIL 21-MAY 21
Forgive someone who quickly apologizes. A receptive woman can keep a secret. A long wait ends at bedtime.

GEMINI
MAY 22-JUNE 21
A sudden attraction provokes a sharp comment. Preposterous people behave like cowards. Focus on being well and happy.

CANCER
JUNE 22-JULY 22
A meeting leads to new beliefs. Make a quick getaway after an interruption. Don't wait too long for a delivery.

LEO
JULY 23-AUG 23
Make a necessary break in your journey. Test a theory and make a request. Don't be afraid to take it easy.

VIRGO
AUG 24-SEPT 22
Slip away from a confusing crisis. An old-fashioned woman reprimands a fickle person. Someone's devotion will satisfy you.

LIBRA
SEPT 23-OCT 23
Work out a way to ease suffering. Someone's outrage will overwhelm you. Emotional turmoil causes a mishap.

SCORPIO
OCT 24-NOV 22
Accept new challenges for old time's sake. A daydreamer needs more information. A proud person is dangerously painstaking.

SAGITTARIUS
NOV 23-DEC 21
A situation worsens before improving. An incredible person needs to be pampered. A younger guy is only horsing around.

CAPRICORN
DEC 22-JAN 20
You'll be surprised by someone's guilt. Beware displaying any raw emotion in public. A traitor endangers a loving feeling.

AQUARIUS
JAN 21-FEB 18
A minor complication becomes a decisive factor. You'll overcome a bout of indecision. Someone's stubbornness is meaningless.

PISCES
FEB 19-MARCH 20
Make up with an unpredictable dissenter. Break new ground by using strong words. Stop talking about amusing yourself with gifts.

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Eva plans European escape

Eva Longoria is planning to kiss the U.S. goodbye. She and husband Tony Parker are planning to move to Parker's native country France — "after Desperate Housewives," Longoria tells Extra. "Actually, after his basketball career." METRO WORLD NEWS

Celebrity Buzz

Amy moving to St. Lucia

PEOPLE Amy Winehouse is moving permanently to St. Lucia, femalefirst.co.uk reports.

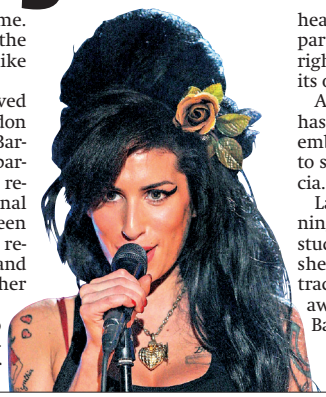
The troubled singer has spent the majority of the year on the Caribbean island and, after feeling isolated after briefly returning to the U.K. last month, has decided to make her home there.

A source said: "Amy is fed up with the stress and trauma that comes with being in London.

"She has made so many friends in St. Lucia and says it feels like home. When she returned to the U.K. in March she felt like an outsider."

Amy — who moved away from North London to the quieter area of Barnet to escape her hard-partying friends when she returned from her original vacation — has been house-hunting since returning to the island and has finally found her dream home.

The source added to Britain's The Sun newspaper: "She has her heart set on one house in particular. It is massive, right on the beach and has its own big garden too."



Amy's record company has reportedly decided to embrace the star's desire to start a new life in St. Lucia.

Label bosses are planning to finance a recording studio in her new home, so she can work on new tracks for the follow up to award-winning album Back to Black.

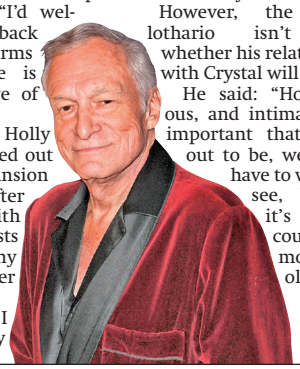
METRO NEWS SERVICE

Hef misses ex

PEOPLE Hugh Hefner is desperate for ex-girlfriend Holly Madison to return to the Playboy mansion, femalefirst.co.uk reports.

The 83-year-old magazine mogul says he is still in love with the 29-year-old blonde and admits he has never got over their split.

He said: "I'd welcome Holly back with open arms because she is still the love of my life."



However, Holly — who moved out of the mansion last year after her split with Hugh — insists there isn't any chance of her returning.

She said: "I loved my time at the mansion and think the world of Hef. There comes a time in everyone's life where they need to go their own way."

Hugh now lives in the mansion with current girlfriends 19-year-old twins Kristina and Karissa Shannon and Crystal Harris, 22.

However, the aging lothario isn't sure whether his relationship with Crystal will last.

He said: "How serious, and intimate, and important that works out to be, well we'll have to wait and see, because it's only a couple months old."

METRO NEWS SERVICES

Katy flashed a girl and she liked it?

PEOPLE Katy Perry once flashed her vagina to Lady Sovereign. The singer accidentally showed the rapper her nether regions during a wild party in her hotel room, femalefirst.co.uk reports.

Lady Sovereign revealed to thehothits.com: "At one of her after-parties she put her pyjamas on and I don't think she was wearing anything underneath. It was like a long T-shirt kind of thing ... I saw something I shouldn't have seen."

Gossip blogger Perez Hilton recently claimed Katy and Lady Sovereign had "locked themselves in a bathroom" at a recent party and were "doing naughty things."

METRO NEWS SERVICES

Sean files for separation

SEPARATION Sean Penn has filed for "legal separation with minor children" from his wife of 13 years, actress Robin Wright Penn, usmagazine.com reports.

He filed the papers last Friday, Extra first reported.

Penn, 48, initially filed for divorce in December 2007, but his petition was later dismissed. Three days later, Wright Penn, 43, filed her own paperwork.

But in April 2008, the couple's divorce petition was dismissed at their request.

They attended February's Academy Awards, where Penn won his second Best Actor Oscar for his role as gay rights activist Harvey Milk.

He did not thank Wright Penn — with whom he has two children, Dylan, 18, and Hopper Jack, 15 — while accepting his award. After the show, he told Oprah Winfrey that his gratitude for his wife was "implicit."

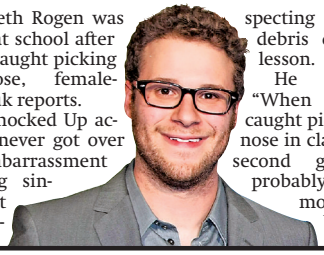
"I wanted to keep things focused on the professional team around this movie," he explained. "Because with Robin comes my mother and my son and my daughter, and half of them will punish me if I mention them."

METRO NEWS SERVICES

Seth's traumatic childhood

PEOPLE Seth Rogen was bullied at school after he was caught picking his nose, femalefirst.co.uk reports.

The Knocked Up actor has never got over the embarrassment of being singled out for inspecting his nose debris during a lesson.



He said: "When I got caught picking my nose in class in the second grade is probably the most embarrassing moment of my life. I get teased and picked on a lot after that."

As well as picking his nose, Seth admits his constant perspiring is very unpleasant for his co-stars and friends.

He said: "I sweat a little more than I would like to!"

METRO NEWS SERVICES

Tyra takes the stand

LEGAL Tyra Banks stepped out as the top witness yesterday, testifying against accused stalker Brady Green, people.com reports.

"I fear my safety. I feel extremely vulnerable. I fear the safety of my staff. My family. The people in my vicinity," said Banks, who appeared calm and spoke softly as she talked about Green, 38, who is charged with stalking, harassment and criminal trespass.

Explaining the intensity of the threat, Banks said, "I was at work one day about to leave and a bunch of people on my staff said, 'No! You can't go.' (Green) got past security and you need to be here. Never in my career had staff reacted like this. I had to stay in my dressing room for a while."

The incident scared Banks: "I like to walk around my neighbourhood. I run outside. I like to go to the movies by myself, eat meals by myself ... The show made significant changes. They hired security. Plainclothes too."

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#29 04/09

Maybe she should stick to singing...
Brit singing sensation Susan Boyle is reportedly looking to cash in with a tell-all book, according to Crain's New York. But some publishing executives say there might not be much to tell. "She has a story," one editor tells the newspaper. "But it's a short story." METRO WORLD NEWS

Celebrity Buzz

Mel seen out with his new girlfriend

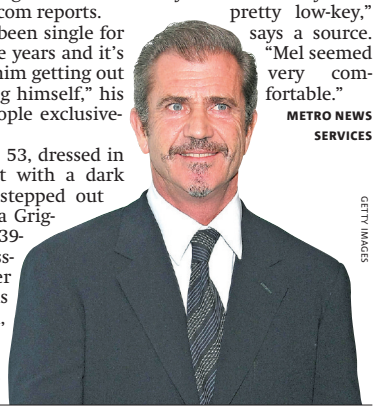
RELATIONSHIP More than two weeks after his wife filed for divorce, a smiling Mel Gibson made a rare public appearance with his girlfriend Tuesday night at the L.A. industry screening of X-Men Origins: Wolverine, people.com reports.

"Mel has been single for almost three years and it's nice to see him getting out and enjoying himself," his rep tells People exclusively.

The actor, 53, dressed in a black suit with a dark grey shirt, stepped out with Oksana Grigorieva, a 39-year-old Russian singer signed to his record label, Icon Records. The couple held hands as they walked the carpet before taking a seat at the screening at Grauman's Chinese Theatre in Hollywood.

"They came in quietly and as under-the-radar as they could and they were pretty low-key," says a source. "Mel seemed very comfortable."

METRO NEWS SERVICES



GETTY IMAGES

Sam given restraining order

LEGAL Los Angeles Superior Court Judge Aviva Bobb issued a three-year restraining order against Sam Lutfi, the singer's former manager on Tuesday, people.com reports.

Jon Eardley — a lawyer who has repeatedly challenged the validity of Jamie Spears' legal control over his daughter — was also slapped with a restraining order for three years.

Both men must stay at least 100 yards away from Britney, her two sons and her family members' homes, and must not harass Britney and her children or contact them through phone, mail or email. It also prohibits them from "acting on Ms. Spears' behalf or purporting to act on her behalf."

The orders, however, do not specifically protect Jamie and Britney's mother Lynne Spears, which Jamie had sought.

The singer's father, who filed the request on Jan. 30, alleged that both men have harassed his daughter, adding Lutfi arranged the smuggling of a cellphone to the pop star at a hotel.

Bryan Freedman, Lutfi's attorney tells People: "We absolutely will appeal this ruling. Never before in history has a restraining order been issued against someone who answered another person's cries for help."

The order followed several hearings in which Spears' father, her hairstylist, bodyguard, among others, testified that the singer was in fear of Lutfi. In his defence, Lutfi's younger sister Christina testified that it was Britney who hatched the cellphone scheme because she allegedly wanted Lutfi's help to end her father's control.

Last week, Samuel Ingham, a court-appointed lawyer for the pop star, told the judge that "my client's situation has improved dramatically over the last fourteen months. (The orders against Lutfi) is in my client's best interest ... she has suffered emotional distress."

Meanwhile, Lutfi's lawsuit against the Spears family for defamation and battery is still pending.

METRO NEWS SERVICES

Paris' white knight

DISPUTE Paris Hilton's boyfriend got into a fight with a clubber who tried to grope her, female-first.co.uk reports.

The heiress was shocked by a male partygoer who grabbed at her cleavage in a Los Angeles club on Monday night, but boyfriend Doug Reinhardt immediately stepped in to confront him.

A source said: "Doug protected his lady and pushed the guy. That's when all of Doug's boys stepped in and beat the crap out of the guy. Then Doug had security kick him out of the club."

According to witnesses, one of the protagonist's friends had tried to throw a beer bottle at Doug's head but missed, prompting his friends to step in.

Paris later told radaronline.com: "There was this drunk guy that tried to grab me and Doug came to my defence. Doug and his friends were only trying to protect me."

METRO NEWS SERVICES

Posh's tantrum?

PARTY Victoria Beckham has reportedly cancelled her 10th wedding anniversary party, female first.co.uk reports.

The former Spice Girl called off the lavish bash set for July after allegedly accusing husband David of neglecting his family.

The 35-year-old has been single-handedly raising their three sons in the U.S. while David plays for Italian team AC Milan.

A source told a British newspaper: "Being apart is hard for them. It's the first time in their marriage that Victoria has been angry at David.

"David really misses the three boys and still doesn't really understand why she wouldn't move to Milan to keep the family together. They are trying to make it work, but the resentments are simmering."

A spokeswoman for the couple says they now want to keep their celebration low-key.

METRO NEWS SERVICES

Oops, a strip club?

PEOPLE Next time, these stars will be reading the fine print!

Samantha Ronson, Pamela Anderson and Shannen Doherty were not too pleased when they found out they were headed to a strip club Tuesday, usmagazine.com reports.

They all signed on to attend the grand opening of Sapphire Gentleman's Club in NYC without realizing there would be topless dancers and body-painted performers.

Ronson was visibly angry for having to DJ at the event.

"Sam feels she got tricked into performing," a source told usmagazine.com before the party. "She didn't know it was a strip club. She doesn't want to go on tonight!"

In fact, she wrote on her Twitter page: "Note to self: read the whole email ... before saying yes to DJ gigs," she wrote. "Sapphire??? Oops!"

Shannen Doherty — who left after 45 minutes — was equally surprised.

"I had no idea it was a strip club! ... They told me it was a restaurant or club."

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